THE PRINCE OF ORANGE IN THE MIDST OF THE MOB.

WITHIN SEA WALLS;

OR,

How the Dutch kept the Faith.

BY

ELIZABETH H. WALSHE

AND

GEORGE E. SARGENT.

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PREFACE.

A FEW words are needful to explain how it comes to pass that the title page of this volume bears upon it two names as answerable for its contents;—the first being that of a gifted lady whose pen, at one time, was frequently employed in the varied literature of the Religious Tract Society: the second, that of the present writer who, for the sake of convenience and brevity, may be permitted to give that explanation in the first person singular.

Some years ago, then, I received a communication from the Editor of the *Sunday at Home*, stating that some portion of a story had been already written for that periodical by the above-mentioned lady, whose failing health absolutely forbade her making further progress in it. The Editorial letter ended with the request

that I would examine the chapters already prepared, together with a few notes as to the conduct of the after part of the story.

Consenting to this, I entered upon the task, which I found to be daily increasingly pleasant as it proceeded; and in the course of four or five months, the story was completed.

It would have been gratifying to me could I have submitted my portion of the work (about two-thirds of the whole) to the original designer of it. But this gratification was denied me; for long before that completion, her works of faith and labours of love on earth in relation to religious literature were for ever ended. It is not necessary to say whereabout in the book the first pen was dropped and the second took its place: it is enough that the second writer is willingly responsible for the whole.

I have, further, to express my thanks for permission to make use of any portions of Mr. Motley's then recently published and valuable work, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, which might assist in the historical parts of the story, without which permission *Within Sea Walls* would scarcely have been written.

G. E. SARGENT

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WITHIN SEA WALLS.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory.

THE year 1566 opened in the Netherlands, as the foregone year had closed, in universal gloom and distrust. Persecution of the most violent kind was in almost unchecked progress. The Inquisition, which had been introduced into the country by Charles V. some ten years before, was in the full exercise of its usurped authority over the civil laws of the country. For no other crime than that of reading, or even possessing the Scriptures and other prohibited books; for being found at any religious assembly other than those of the Romish, then called the National Church; or even for being suspected of holding views favourable to Protestantism and the doctrines of the Reformation, hundreds and thousands in that most unhappy land had already been despoiled of their goods, imprisoned in filthy dungeons, and put to most exquisite bodily tortures. It

would unnecessarily excite the horror and indignation of our readers to dwell upon, or even to mention, the various forms in which martyrdom then was and had for years been borne in the provinces of the Netherlands, by those who counted not their lives dear to them for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. The various instances of these atrocities given in the following pages, and some incidents in the main narrative itself, though mercifully and tenderly told, are sufficient to prove to how great lengths can be carried the rage and malice of men inspired with diabolical hatred to the gospel, when the will and the power are combined.

"The people became uproarious," we are told. "Even Roman Catholics could not bear this. But popish bulls and excommunications were showered down upon the unhappy country. Imperial decrees were thundered forth, and were upheld and executed by troops who were paid from the wealth which the oppressor had principally screwed out of his victims. The fleets of trading vessels, formerly carrying merchandise to every port of the world, were now freighted with the flying merchants themselves, who settling in Germany and England, transported to these countries their capitals and their industry. The prisons, which were numerous and large, were filled with the innocent, while their proper occupants were allowed to go at large, provided they were poor and could repeat an 'Ave Maria.' People suspected their nearest relations, their own children, their wives, their husbands. No one dared to speak openly about religion, and only then in private, when two or three being assembled in Jesus' name, the oppressed heart could pour itself out and be strengthened in Christian fellowship."[1]

And all this misery was inflicted by Romish ecclesiastics and bigoted rulers upon a people the most loyal, industrious,

[1] J. B. De Leifde.

frugal, and formerly the most contented on the entire continent of Europe.

It will be well to explain that the country known by the name of the Netherlands, at the time of which the following story treats, consisted of those broad fertile lands which are now occupied by the kingdoms of Holland and Belgium. Their ruler was Philip II. of Spain, the same whom we read of in English history as the cold-hearted and bigoted husband of our Queen Mary, of unhappy memory. But Mary had been called to her account eight years before the era at which our story commences; and under the reign of her sister Elizabeth our country was experiencing a happy relief from the persecutions of the former reign, which now seemed to be transplanted to another soil.

The government of the Netherlands had been intrusted by Philip to his sister, the Duchess of Parma; and it was while under her government that the country became the scene of the numberless tragedies already alluded to, and of other social and domestic stirring events like those of which our story especially treats.

CHAPTER II.

The Carillon Player.

EVENING was falling over the city of Ghent. The sun, however, was yet high above the horizon; for the time of year was midsummer. From the numerous towers and pinnacles which rose high above the neighbouring house-tops began to sound the modulated tones of bells, mingling in musical effect through the calm air. It was the time of vespers, and the hour of retirement from daily labour.

Presently, amid the carillons, another sound arose, which increased gradually, like the surging of a sea. It was caused by the tramp of human feet, and the hum of human voices, as bands of tired artisans poured along the streets.

High in one of the belfries, whence chimed the carillons, a man stood before a range of immense wooden keys, like notes of a gigantic organ. Each, as he struck it, swung the bell above, and thus a melody was fashioned forth.[1] It was a mournful one

[1] Such chime-bells, so played, are in some belfries of our own land, as in St. Giles', Edinburgh.

this evening, the music of a Miserere: sweet and sad to listeners far below. The player lingered over the notes, heedless of the clanging echoes in the tower above, and sent his music raining down upon the streets longer than need have been, for the very love of it. When it had ended, he connected again by a crank the machinery of the ordinary chimes,—a cylinder constructed like that of a barrel-organ, which would note the hours till morning.

Gradually the melody died from all the steeples, and the tramp ceased in the busy streets below. Then from the body of the monastery church, to which this belfry belonged, ascended other music, echoing faintly through cloisters and closed doors to this rude loft under the bells. It was the Salve Regina, or Virgin's Hymn, at vespers, sung by the choir of priests.

Our carillon-player scarcely heard it; he was gazing intently from a fretted loophole over the wide flat land. Closest lay the town, enclosed by a wide extent of walls and fortifications: long lines of streets and squares, shining canals, and three hundred bridges, clear as in a map; the frowning citadel ("Chateau des Espagnols," the free-born Flemings called it), set in the ancient quarter of St. Bavon, keeping guard, as Charles V. intended it should. Not far was the famous Beffori, with the gilded dragon (relic of the Crusades and of Van Arteveldt's raid upon Bruges) glittering atop, too bright to look at; thence had the tocsin of the great bell "Roelandt" been wont to sound alarm of fire or war, until deposed by the aforesaid emperor as a sedition-monger. Grand churches, massive convents, elegant private dwellings, huge factories, rose frequently above the level of common houses, for the Gantois were a rich and religious people; ships lined the quays,—the murmur of a dense population brooded about it all.

But not at the innumerable house-tops of the out-spread city did the carillon-player fix his more earnest gaze. This was attracted to a spot beyond the walls, where the green country stretched a long way off towards the dim sea-dykes, intersected with reaches of gleaming watercourses, on which slow barges travelled; dotted with farm-steadings, where peaceful people lived, and tall poplars grew, and sleek cattle pastured. But what particularly attracted the attention of the interested spectator, was something unusual in the meadow-land we have described; a camp seemed to be forming. Wagons were drawn up, tents were pitched, bodies of men were moving about.

"They cannot mean to defy Her Highness's government!" murmured the solitary man. "Do they forget that the edicts are in as much force as ever?"

He shook his head as he turned aside to his large-keyed instrument, and forthwith proceeded to disobey the edict his own self; for he thrust his hand into a hidden crevice of the woodwork, and drew forth a book, in which he read, among other passages utterly opposed to the state of things then existing, the following:

"Our Lord Christ, when He cometh, is nothing else but joy and sweetness to a trembling and broken heart: as here Paul witnesseth, who setteth Him out with this most sweet and comfortable title when he saith, 'which loved me and gave Himself up for me.' Christ, therefore, in very deed is a lover of those which are in trouble and anguish, in sin and death; and such a lover as gave Himself for us. . . . Read therefore with great vehemency those words, 'me,' and 'for me;' and so inwardly practise with thyself, that thou with a sure faith mayest conceive and print this 'me' in thy heart, and apply it to thyself, not doubting but that thou art of the number of those to whom this 'me' belongeth; also that Christ

hath not only loved Peter and Paul, and given Himself for them, but that the same grace also as well pertaineth as cometh to us as unto them."

Thereupon our carillon player lifted his head, as having heard pleasant news, and his commonplace Flemish face was brightened up with gladness. Had he then also forgotten the terrible edicts? Did he not know that barely having this book in his possession was a title to death "by fire, by the pit, by the sword," or, according to a boon lately granted, by the halter? Any inquisitor would recognise in the foregoing paragraph the foul heresy of Martin Luther.

But it was no common or cheap news in that age for a man to hear or read in the words of Scripture itself that the Lord Jesus had indeed loved him, and died for him; that he had no price to pay for salvation, neither in golden guilders nor yet in penances, nor in fires of purgatory. Luther's *Commentary on the Galatians*, however, was intended to send its reader to the Holy Scriptures; and the present one drew from the same recess a well-worn Flemish Testament, to look for the text that had so moved him; and in the search he came upon other passages by which he was also refreshed. In the strength of that soul-sustenance he felt that he also might perhaps be able to dare something for his Saviour's sake.

Once more his eyes glanced from the loophole upon the distant encampment, and, as the solitary's observations were renewed, his heart yearned towards his brethren, with the drawing of those invisible Divine bonds which are none the less real because the world denies their existence.

Presently he descended the long ladders by many stages from the tower-top, with a purpose more than half formed in his mind. Alas for human strength! Opening the postern door into the church cloister (which he had carefully locked within ere he went up), his eyes fell upon the white scapular

of an Augustinian monk pacing to and fro, while reading and repeating his Hours. At the sight of this monk the carillon player drew aside timidly. Brother Guy was reported to be the devoutest and also the sternest monk in the community; the keenest against heresy, and always detailed on the duty of attending inveterate impenitents at the last.

"You seldom are seen at vespers now, Gerard Franck," said the monk, stopping short, and it might have been noticed how glowing were the eyes in the severe-looking face under that white cowl.

"The carillons——," began the poor official, by way of excuse.

"Nay, nay; who desireth to serve God must not make his daily business a cover for neglect. The carillons ceased long since." Saying this, the monk resumed his walk and his clasped book without more words.

"Does he suspect me?" was the anxious thought of the reprimanded man as he humbly went home. This home was close under the shadow of the big church, a brick box set gable-end outwards, quite up against the carven buttresses,—one of a nest of such little houses, in which dwelt chiefly the dependants of the ecclesiastical establishment. A golden light was by this time beginning to climb the high sloping roofs and floriated pinnacles, as the sun sank towards the distant dykes; but none penetrated the narrow streets at their foot.

BUTTERWORTH & HEAP

CHAPTER III.

The Pedlar.

THE door of the little brick box was quickly opened by some one who had evidently been watching from the projecting casement of closely-leaded panes. "Father, father, you have been long absent; and here is Master Arnoldzoon waiting to speak with you."

A suppressed eagerness in the girl's manner made her father glance again at her as he passed in to greet his friend, who was a short, well-built young man, with a curling pointed beard, especially bright and beaming eyes, and lame in one of his feet.

"You have heard of what is going on outside?" was his first salutation.

"I saw somewhat unusual from the belfry," was the reply. "Lysken, my child, set on the supper; we can talk afterwards." The speaker had by no means recovered the cold shock of the monk's severe rebuke; but the more ardent man went on.

"The right of us freeborn Netherlanders to meet together to hear the Word of God has been put to the test; crowds are

gathering all through Flanders and Hainault for worship and preaching, and no king or kaiser, priest or pope, durst say them nay! If not in temples made with hands, then in God's greater temple, under the open heavens; and I would that you saw the enthusiasm, the heartfelt gladness of those multitudes!"

"But I remember such preaching being tried at Tournay and Valenciennes, five years agone, and it brought only the burning of Master John Lanoy, the preacher," observed the carillon player.

"The people have encouragement now that was wanting then. Our Flemish nobles had not made a stand against the Inquisition and foreign tyranny as lately."

"Ah, you allude to the Gueux. Truly all Netherlands has heard enough of that band of brawlers; but where is its good work?"

Arnoldzoon made no further answer than to shake his head, and addressed himself to his supper. He concluded that his host was out of sorts, knowing that those attached to "the religion" had much to mar their tempers. Of course our carillon player came round under this judicious silence, and presently manifested the cause of his chagrin.

"Father Guy is watching me. I dare not go to this open-air preaching for the dread of him."

"If all men were of your mind, then were 'the religion' lost," said Arnoldzoon, bluntly.

"But my place as player of the carillons?" Lysken's bread and his own, to say nothing of bodily safety, depended on his outward orthodoxy. So the timid official felt.

"He that saveth his life shall lose it," rejoined the other. "But," pushing aside his trencher when he had finished his meal, and he ate as one not accustomed to loiter, "I'll tell thee some news to raise thy poor heart. Know that the true

meaning of the conferences at Breda and Hoogstraten has come out; the Prince of Orange is known to be on the popular side; and he is worth ten thousand men in his single person. Besides, the federation of the Compromise has gained two thousand subscribers among the lords of the land, all sworn to oppose the Inquisition, and to defend each other to the death."

"But who shall defend us—the poor commons of Flanders? It is not so long since we had burning and burying alive in the Friday Market, and only the other day a poor preacher was strangled."

"Courage, friend: such dark times are almost over. It is whispered that the nobles (Count Louis of Nassau at their head) will retain a body of German free-lances to oppose the Spaniards, should the Inquisition be enforced."

"Truly nothing is to be hoped for from the government," said Franck, moodily; "see the Moderation placard they put forth, as a great effort of clemency! Rightly it is called rather the Murderation!"

"Well, it has signally failed of effect, if it was intended to blind either the commons or the seigneurs," remarked Arnoldzoon. "And, besides, no inquisitor can arrest an army! Armies are what gather round our pastors. These eyes saw seven thousand men listening to Herman Stryker outside Oudenarde; and I expect to see ten thousand Gantois to-morrow in yon meadow-lands, proclaiming their freedom to worship God!"

The speaker sprang upright in his ardour, despite his lameness, and his eyes shone with the steady, clear light of his earnest soul.

"Father, shall not we be there?" asked the girl Lysken, very softly.

"You know not what danger you brave, my daughter."

Arnoldzoon left her to carry the point in her own way. He walked to the wide-mullioned casement filled with carreaux —very small squares of greenish glass sunk in lead. A light was already kindled in just such another window opposite.

"Your neighbour makes the beautiful lace still?" said he, presently.

"The Vrouw van Muler? Surely. She has a rare finger for the finer sorts, and gets much of her living that way," replied Lysken.

"I want some of that point lace among my merchandize," he said; "it fetched a fair price last time. But you have become a lace-worker yourself, maiden?" and he glanced at a pillow and bobbins set aside on a bench.

"The vrouw has been teaching me," was the answer; "but I doubt it will be a long time ere my handiwork be like hers."

"Let me see it." Being a travelling merchant—sooth to say, a pedlar—he was a judge of excellence in most fabrics, and delighted Lysken by taking some of her lace and leaving a golden carolus in the basket.

"Such finery as this gets me access to the ladies of our lords," he said; "and then for the greater treasure that I bear!"

He looked as happy as if it were not a death-warrant he carried with him. But a few summers before, a hawker returning from the fair of Frankfort with scriptural books, gave his pack into the custody of the mistress of the inn where he halted. She, being curious, opened it in his absence, found some of the books, and showed them to a priest; upon which immediately followed the imprisonment of the owner, who after some time was burnt to death in a slow fire.

Knowing of such incidents, it was natural that Franck should presently remark, "How you escape month after month is to me a marvel."

"I have not entirely escaped; I have been in the torture-chamber," Arnoldzoon answered, quietly. "I do not love recalling it, except on my knees; it terrifieth women and weak souls. What lamed my right leg, think you? The pulleys of the rack."

He paused a moment, and added in a deeply-reverential tone—

"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

After that there was a little silence, broken by Franck's saying, "Friend, I would fain ask thee if, in those circumstances of peril and of pain, with the malice of the evil one let loose about thee, there were any sensible consolations of grace—any strengthenings from above?"

"Without doubt. This I say, that my soul was supported by a power and a joy Divine that raised it above the shrinking flesh; so that I can well believe how in their extremities those men of God whom He honours to die for His sake are sustained in a miraculous manner. Why should we doubt it? Hath He not expressly said, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the fire, it shall not kindle upon thee?' And we have proof that the promise is true—proof from the pens and lips of men that have suffered."

He opened a small black knapsack which he had laid down on first coming in, and took papers from a secret pocket.

"In my wanderings I find accounts of our martyrs which I fain would not let perish, if it might be that hereafter I found a quiet time to print them, for the glory of God and the encouragement of the brethren."

Lysken kindled a rushen candle. Her father rose from his seat and went to the window with an uneasy expression. "The times be so suspicious," he murmured, "and the sight of folk gathered about papers may be interpreted to an evil end; I will draw down this curtain." And he fixed the

hanging of thick woollen, so that not a gleam was visible outside.

"Here is from Jerom Segerts," began Arnoldzoon; "copy of a letter penned in 1551, when he lay in the worst dungeons of Antwerp. He writes to his wife, only a few days before being burnt (an' by your leave, but she had just your name, Mistress Lysken!)"

"I shall honour it the more, were she like-minded with him," replied the girl.

"That she was; and, after his death, was drowned in the Scheldt for her faith. She to heaven by water, he by fire; the stronger the sorer lot. But here were his words to encourage her:—

"'I have so much comfort through God's promises, that I do not so much as think upon my sufferings. I feel so much joy and pleasure that I can neither express it by speech nor writing. I did not imagine that a man could be sensible of so much gladness in a prison; it is so great that it will scarce allow me to sleep. I can scarce think I have lain here more than one day. Oh, that I could but break my heart in pieces, and distribute it between you and the rest of my friends. . . The Lord hath granted us such a measure of strength and confidence that we cannot sufficiently thank Him for the great mercies we have received from Him.'

"And it was Jerom Segerts who answered to the judges that tempted him to recant, 'Though ye should set the door of the prison open, and should say to me, "Go, only say you are sorry," I would not stir, because I know I have the truth on my side.'"

"A lion heart in very deed," said Franck.

"I'll read no more; it makes Mistress Lysken's eyes tender and her cheek pale," remarked the pedlar, putting aside the papers. "Affright were a bad end to serve. I'll tell rather

of a most singular escape I had not long since. Many prohibited books were in my pack, hid between the mule saddle and the panniers, when the constables stopped me at a bridge. 'Nay, we must take thee before the schout,' said they. For this happened up in Holland, where they call their burgomasters the schout."

"I thought they were well-affected to the truth in Holland."

"What, when the common gibe for Amsterdam is Murderdam? No province of His Majesty's hath given more martyrs to heaven than there. One of the last was Hans Winter, summoned before judges at the Hague for the offence of having translated the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and various passages of Scripture into the Dutch tongue, and put them into the hands of school-children and such like ignorant persons to learn without book. And on the scaffold he sang the Te Deum with a steadfast and joyful countenance; and a bystander hath told me that after he had pronounced the words, 'The noble army of martyrs praise Thee!' ere he had time for more the sword descended."

The speaker had forgotten Lysken; but her countenance only glowed.

"So when I was brought before the magistrate I had some cause to quake, for my condemnation was certain if only a leaf of Luther's were found. The schout was in the village green, where certain were shooting at the butts. 'Unpack the knave's burden,' quoth he. And so out came my fine laces and points for hosen, and my camlet from Valenciennes, my cambrics and black cyprus stuffs, my box of gilded coifs, for the burghers' dames, but never a book.

"Then began he to rail at the town militia who had brought me. 'Hast other merchandise besides these, fellow?' cried he to me; 'the king of Spain and the Indies makes not war against women's gear.'

"'Truly but I have, your worship,' I answered; 'here be a book or two likewise, which I keep to pleasure my customers.' Thereupon he looked graver, though less choleric. 'Oho! so we have it at last,' said he, and forthwith donned the spectacles that hung on his breast. 'A Treatise of Expositions on the Articles of Louvain, by the most reverend father Ruard Tapper, Dean of Louvain.'

"He turned the book round, and looked at me over his glasses. 'Why, fellow, Messer Ruard Tapper was grand inquisitor of the Low Countries! Short work would he have made of such as you.'

"That was very true: however, I only answered, 'Did not then the reverend father desire the book, which he had made to confute the heretics, should be circulated?' 'A confutation?' said he; and sitting down in an arbour of willows looked through a page. 'Why, here be most excellent matter,' said he, 'fit for any good Christian's reading.' Which indeed is true, though in other sort than he intended; for further on there be printed whole chapters of Calvin and Melancthon, so that what is most strictly prohibited by the king's placards may be read safely in this book."

Franck laughed. "Excellent," he cried; "the enemy unawares teaching the truth."

"Ay, and I have reason for thinking that many an one has thus been enlightened. The same grand inquisitor made a complaint to my lord Viglins, president of Her Highness's council, that the remissness of civil magistrates was causing the great spread of heresy in the Netherlands, which all their fagots could not burn up. 'Nay,' answered the president, 'but you and your brethren, writing books against the heretics, do widely publish their doctrines and reasonings; for readers who nicely observe the arguments of our adversaries do not peruse the confutations as attentively as they ought.' He

durst not say the confutations were not strong enough; but verily no babe in the knowledge of Scripture but could overthrow them.

"However, the good schout was so charmed to find an orthodox book where he expected the contrary, that he sent me on my way without further search, only detaining the volume for his own reading, the which I was the more happy to leave, in that the whole truth of the gospel is amply declared in its extracts."

"A pleasant enough adventure, as it ended," exclaimed the carillon player.

"And now, for that early in the morning I must be on the field, I shall presently bid you farewell," said Arnoldzoon, fastening his knapsack again.

"In all the years I've known thee, Kaspar, never to tell me how you came by your lame foot."

"Doth the soldier boast of his scars ere the fray be finished? Nay, it is enough for me that the Captain of the great army knows."

He stood ready to go. "But shall we not first have a prayer?"

They knelt. Through Gerard Franck's ears at first seemed to be whispered words of the murderous edict, "Any householder who shall permit any act of religious worship in his house shall be executed by the rope or the sword."

But presently he lost his fears in the fervour of that prayer

CHAPTER IV.

The Widow Van Muler and her Family.

LATE as the hour was, Lysken Franck crossed the narrow street (half a dozen steps) to her friend the vrouw's threshold. The bond between them was closer than that of lace-making: the maiden had learned much else in this humble house.

"We are going to the field-preaching to-morrow," was the wind-up of her eager recital.

The widow was a pale, grave-faced woman, with snowy hair almost belying a countenance which seemed not old enough for such garniture, and which moreover was singularly stilled and calm in its expression. "I was making up food for the day," she said; "sausage and brown loaf. Young people brook not fasting."

"And I never thought of it," cried Lysken. "Master Arnoldzoon's news put all other matters out of my head."

"It will be well to go," said the widow. "We must honour our Lord Christ at all cost."

Was this that worthless thing, a mere phrase? words only "the toll of custom?" Lysken knew they were not; the

woman's life and her husband's death had proved them to be more than these as spoken by her.

He, named Galeyn van Muler, had been a schoolmaster at Oudenarde, some miles from Ghent. Twelve years before our story begins, viz., in 1554, the famous inquisitor Titelmann made a descent upon the town in one of his heretic-hunting excursions; and information was laid before him that this obscure man, "not being doctor of a learned university," presumed to read the Holy Scriptures.

"The poor man was under very great straits," writes Brandt, the martyrologist of the Low Countries. "On the one hand he dreaded to deny God or the truth, as he had learned it; on the other, he feared to confess anything to the prejudice of himself, his wife, and five small children. He endeavoured, therefore, to extricate himself from this dilemma by demanding to he beard before the civil magistrates, his lawful judges, and that the process against him might be carried on by the way of charge and proof."

The reader should be told that, according to the constitution of the Netherlands (to which both Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second had solemnly sworn), the Inquisition was an illegal tribunal; and the act of extorting materials for a man's condemnation out of his own lips was totally repugnant to the laws of the land. But the Romish Church cared nought for such impediments. The poor schoolmaster, however, evaded a direct answer to Titelmann's insidious questions as long as he could, until the inquisitor followed Satan's example in quoting the Scriptures for a foul purpose, by saying, sneeringly,—

"What! thou layest great store by Scripture, yet Christ declareth, 'Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him

also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels.' And St. Peter commands us to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. I therefore require of you, at this present time, an account of your faith."

"Upon these words," says Brandt, "the schoolmaster's tongue broke loose; his faint-heartedness vanished, his love for wife and children gave way to the zeal with which his soul was kindled, and, under these powerful emotions, he said within himself, 'My God, my God, assist me, according to Thy promise.'

"Then, turning himself to the inquisitor, he bravely said to him, 'Ask me now what you please. I shall plainly answer whatever the Spirit of God suggests to me to say, and hide nothing.'"

Thenceforward it was easy to convict him. Titelmann had touched the Christian loyalty, and roused all the courage of the renewed soul.

"Stay," said the inquisitor, "do you not love your wife and children?"

"Oh, from my heart!" exclaimed the agonized confessor of the truth. "It is my love for them distracts me. I tell you truly, if the whole world were turned into pure gold and given to me, I would freely resign it, so I might even have them with me in prison,—nay, though I were to be fed on bread and water, and covered with contempt."

"You need only a word, to live with them freely as before," said Titelmann. "Recant your heresies, and all will be well."

"I should sin against God and my conscience," said Galeyn, sadly but firmly. "Never will I for all the world, not even for wife and children, renounce the truth, as long as God shall strengthen me with His grace."

Thus it was to the end; and Titelmann delivered him over to the secular arm,—for the Church in her mercy never sheds blood: which was also one reason for the ecclesiastical device of burning. This humble schoolmaster, his sole crime "being addicted to reading the Scriptures," was fastened to a stake in the midst of his familiar market-place. The favour of being strangled before being burned was granted him.

Having all these scenes in her memory, and knit into her heart-strings, it is little wonder that the widow was a still and silent woman; her chief thought in life being to make his children worthy of their heroic father.

They were all with her next day, through the streets of Ghent, on their way to the field-preaching. Was it not to them a pleasant holiday? Hans, the eldest, a fine youth of eighteen (already apprenticed to the printing craft), led his mother by the hand. His sister Betgen (the youngest) clung at her mother's side. Kloos and Galeyn followed, stout boys, bearing the baskets; and easily the party glided into the stream of exodus from the city.

All Ghent seemed in motion towards the gate nearest the Protestant encampment; the crowd resembled that of the artisans at meal-times. The warders looked from their post at the archways, and had no orders to stop the torrent, which indeed would have as easily swept aside them and their arquebuses as tadpoles in a tide. It was a considerable walk to the meadows in which the Reformed had taken stand; but men were stationed at intervals to show the path where necessary. And within a short distance were set sentinels, armed with pike or matchlock, and some men rode about on horseback, to guard against surprise. Barricades had also been improvised with stout stakes, and wagons: while the line of a wide canal defended the rear of the position.

Even Hans was armed. Dressed in his best grey doublet and hosen, when ready to set out he had showed his mother a sheathed poniard hid in his vest.

"To defend thee and the children, should the soldiers come upon us, mother. But my master says that they dare not. The monks are cowering in their convents at this hour."

"The sword establishes not our Lord's kingdom," she had answered.

"Mother, I long to strike down persecutors!" and the youth's cheek glowed. Well knew the mother of what he was thinking.

"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord," she repeated gently; and so they went forth. Their neighbour the carillon player, having got out of the town by unperceived ways of his own,—probably by a barge on a canal,—joined them beyond the walls. His spirits rose under the protection of the numbers he saw encountering the same risk. Near the barricades they heard a familiar voice.

"Sirs, gentlemen burghers, will you purchase copies of the hymns out of the French of Clement Marot, done into Flemish metre by Master Pierre Dathenus, a monk of Poperinguen? Most excellently translated,—all for one groat and a stiver. Yes, my demoiselle, here are two books." And Lysken Franck paid away some of her new money.

"Cry you mercy, Gerard Franck," exclaimed Arnoldzoon, for it was he, "but I knew you not, nor your daughter, in this crowd. See, the preaching will be yonder, where they are setting up a pulpit of planks across those two wagons; and methinks that knoll beside it, nigh those pollard willows, were no bad place for best hearing."

The way thither led among groups sitting on the grass; knots of armed men, the ruder carrying pitchforks and axes, others with ancient steel arbalests or cross-bows, which had

done duty in extinct wars; others with broadsword, matchlock, carabine; a few with that lately invented and much-dreaded weapon, the pistol. These, among women and children, the stripling and the man of grey hairs, the wealthy burgher in fur-edged robe, the artisan in leather jerkin, the lady citizen in dainty ruff and brocaded farthingale and richly-clocked hosen, the humbler wife in linen coif and striped kirtle,—all assembled by a common interest in the proscribed religion. They were encouraged by seeing one another; and some of the more speculative may actually have dreamed of a time when it should not be penal to worship God elsewhere than within a Romish chapel or cathedral.

One of the most prominent individuals present was a gentleman standing by a superb charger, whence he had evidently alighted but a few minutes,—a person arrayed in a coat of blue velvet, having a Spanish mantle cast carelessly over one shoulder, and the insignia of the imperial order of the Golden Fleece dangling ostentatiously on his broad breast. This glittering token of rank, the most illustrious in the Netherlands, acted as a cordial on the more timid of the crowd, as the wearer meant it should. Talking to a knot of the citizens, his hand played incessantly with the jewelled hilt of his rapier. A man restless, ardent, excitable, as may be gathered from the sentiments he expressed loudly enough for a considerable circle to hear.

"Meet those hungry wolves with remonstrances, say you? Use gentle words, while they are burning and cutting off heads? Then I forewarn you what will come to pass if we take the pen, as it were, and leave them the sword. They will laugh and triumph, but we shall weep,—ay, weep tears of blood!"

"Who is he?" asked the Vrouw van Muler.

"They call him Toison d'Or,—the Sieur Nicolas de

Hammes," whispered Franck. "A good friend to the Reformed, —one of the foremost nobles of the Compromise." And the carillon player felt quite comfortable under such distinguished auspices.

"A fiery spirit, methinks," she rejoined; and was glad to find the only place where they would have sitting place was beyond the sound of his voice, for the sake of her Hans.

"Mother, can these be gentlefolks of his company, wearing doublets and cloaks of ashen grey, coarser a deal than mine?" —and Hans looked at his sleeve,—"with common felt hats, and—see! leathern pouches and wooden bowls by their side, like beggars hasting to the convent gate for a meal?"

They had never before seen the chosen uniform of the Gueux,—a band of nobles and gentry, who had sworn to "contend with the Inquisition, and remain faithful to the king, even till compelled to wear the beggar's sack." Right soon they discovered that the two articles of their resolution were utterly incompatible, and that Philip the Second considered admiration for the Inquisition an essential part of loyalty to himself.

CHAPTER V.

The Field-preaching.

As the preacher had not yet arrived, an undercurrent of conversation ran through the greater part of the assembly; others were reading the little books circulated by Arnoldzoon and hawkers like him. Lysken looked at her hymns, and found them dedicated to all congregations in the Low Countries who with their pastors "were groaning under the cross."

Lysken's attention was so strongly attracted by the book she held in her hand, that she heard nothing more till her father whispered, "The preacher is come;" then lifting her eyes, she saw a tonsured head above the pulpit of planks. Herman Stryker had been a Dominican monk of Zwoll, and still wore the dark habit of his order; a man on whose life was set a great price, who daily was hunted like a wild beast, and knew that the cruellest death awaited him it captured, but who, notwithstanding, never ceased to proclaim in all quarters the good news of "gratuitous salvation."

Deep silence fell upon that great gathering. They were

about to engage in a work involving life or death; the worshipping God according to their conscience, than which there existed no worse crime in their ruler's eyes. Breaking the hush, arose the ex-monk's earnest voice.

In his prayer he thanked God for this new opportunity of proclaiming His gospel. And with a fulness of meaning which we in our safe days can scarcely appreciate, he also thanked God for all His servants who had departed this life in His faith and fear; for the many martyrs by fire, and drowning, and the sword, who had travelled the short road of man's cruelty to the heavenly glory.

The sermon was at first somewhat polemical. Herman Stryker desired to strengthen the doctrine whence practice must spring. Certain tempters were abroad, who would fain combine Romanism and the gospel; thinking that by such means the offence of the cross would cease. "Conform to the ceremonies of the Church," said they, "assist at the mass, and keep your own opinions private." (Whereat our carillon player rather drooped his head). "But by saying Amen to the priest's mass, you deny the grace of Jesus Christ!" cried the preacher.

"Nay, my masters," he added, "but how should this be? Even they would have us preachers to deny our Lord in such wise, to act one thing and to speak another; for they know that it would be the grave of all sound doctrine. If I preach against idolatry, and at the same time exhibit an idol in the mass, with design that the people should fall down and worship it; if I teach Christ, as having already obtained an everlasting redemption for us by that one oblation made to His Father, of His own body on the cross, and yet afterwards offer Him up again to the Father by the sacrifice of the mass, to merit fresh pardon for the sins both of the living and the dead; if I tell you, that Christ instituted the holy eucharist

FIELD PREACHING.

with bread and wine, in remembrance of His death, and for a seal in our hearts of the communion of His body and blood, whereby forgiveness of sins, justification and salvation were obtained for us—and afterwards, shutting up a wafer or a piece of bread, carry it about in a gold or silver box, to the end it should be honoured and worshipped as the whole Christ, both God and man: if I teach that Christ alone has purified us with His blood, and that there is no salvation without Him, and afterwards pretend myself to purge the dead from their sins, and to bestow heaven upon them by holy water, incense, vigils, and masses for the soul; if I teach that we are to worship God alone, since He only can see our hearts, since He alone is our Saviour, and has not given His honour to another, and presently after, in the canon of the mass, invoke forty or fifty dead men, and with a loud voice sing to Mary in the church, 'Come, thou Saviour of the world, take away our sins!' if I affirm that none can come to the Father but by the Son, and that therefore Christ is our only Mediator and Intercessor, and then go and beg an audience of God, in the collects of the mass, through the saints that are dead, and make the Virgin my intercessor:—for all this treacherous and unfaithful service, what could I expect else, than that while I preach to others, I myself also should become a castaway, and should receive my reward in those dreadful words, 'I know you not; depart, ye workers of iniquity!'"

Afterwards the sermon diverged to the persecuted state of the Christians, his hearers. No new thing was it that the men of Flanders should stand fast and suffer for the truth of God. Old chronicles set forth how that three hundred years before, the gospel prevailed mightily among the common people, by means of those good preachers called the poor men of Lyons; and it was warred against by Pope Gregory the Ninth and his inquisitor, monk Robert, the Dominican. Then

did Flemish earth first smother the living faces of men and women, whose only crime was that they could not adore the sacramental bread; then were cinders of martyrs first cast into the clear rivers. But never since that time had the truth been quite put out in Flanders; and so it was no strange thing that persecution should happen unto this generation. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," said Jesus Christ. And though He loved the apostles so dear that John lay in His very bosom, yet was not John spared the cauldron of boiling oil, nor the exile in Patmos.

"Therefore let not any man say, Christ loveth me not, when he is called to suffer or to die because of the truth. Nay, brethren, thus he is promoted to the ranks of heaven's nobility, whom Christ standeth up to welcome, as He did Stephen. It is because we believe so feebly in the world to come, that we fear to act upon our faith. It is because we cleave to our dross and rags, that we dread the spoiling of our goods, instead of taking it joyfully, like those of old. Brethren, if our eyes were opened now, should we not see the plain full of horses and chariots of fire, like the guard of heaven's train-bands sent to attend the prophet? Angels watch our contest with the powers of evil, and mayhap envy us the battle. To the principalities in heavenly places is the manifold wisdom of God made known by the Church; in the ages to come shall the riches of His grace be showed by His kindness toward us! Ah, brethren, we have eternal life! Fear not them that can kill the body. To the man who trusts in Christ, there is no death!"

The audience drew a long breath when the appeal was ended; and then an outburst of psalmody relieved the pent-up feeling.

CHAPTER VI.

The Beguine Nun.

PREACHING took place next day also in the meadow-lands to many thousands of hearers, but Franck and his daughter were not present. On that evening he came back from his tower in a state of ill-concealed agitation. "They are gone!" he exclaimed to Lysken; "my books are gone! I am a ruined man."

She drew from him that he had been reading them on the evening before Arnoldzoon's visit; he had not looked at them last night after returning from the encampment; and to-day he found the crevice in the woodwork empty. His thought instantly leaped to Father Guy, the Augustinian monk.

"They have a master-key to all buildings about the church. And his eye looked evil upon me in the cloister. I would not keep the books in this house, lest the provost's men should visit us; and now there is only me to be suspected—only me—none else ascends the tower. 'Whoso saveth his life shall lose it.' It is a true saying."

"Nay, father," interposed the girl, "but we are not to run

ourselves in danger needlessly. Who dares to keep Reformed books openly? Even the Vrouw van Muler hides them behind a panel. Blame not yourself, dear father. Did we not hear from Master Arnoldzoon that the persecution must cease henceforth, when the nobles bestir themselves? And if they search all the houses in Ghent for prohibited books, methinks they may soon have a pile as high as Saint Bavon's." This was the great cathedral.

Franck smiled. "I do believe the citizens have much sympathy with 'the religion,'" he said. "But would that my books had been better hidden!"

"Father," spoke his comforter, "your judgment did the wisest you saw to do, and now you must leave the issue with God. Think you that He knows not what perturbs our hearts at this present?" Lysken turned quickly aside to conceal a starting tear.

Her father caught her hand. "Forgive me, my daughter; I have terrified thee overmuch with my little faith. And now that I think of it, surely had mischief been intended for us it had not waited so long. Night is their favoured time for arrests. And where shall the reverend fathers find a more skilful handler of the carillon than myself? Even my lord abbot did vouchsafe to commend the chimes to me no longer ago than last Saturday, when he heard that the chant was of mine own composing! Ay, truly, had mischief been purposed we had seen it ere now."

He walked to and fro, in a troubled sort of way nevertheless, twitching at the hair on his lip. "Besides, flight would be a confession of guilt, like Voorst the Frieslander—all would be forfeited; and how leave my new musical metals, so near completed—the rarest invention—that was to bring fortune for thee, Lysken? Nay, they will never condemn me on the finding of two books." And he ascended a narrow creaking

staircase in the corner to his workshop, where, notwithstanding his assumed bravery, she heard him sigh heavily.

Left alone, Lysken's face was grave indeed: she no longer threw her bobbins deftly to and fro on the lace-pillow, but sat listless, hands in lap, thinking of this new danger. And a temptation came to her (as in many of our deeply-moved moments it does come) in the following suggestion: Voorst the Frieslander had been carillon player before her father—a Lutheran, who fled one day across the Rhine to avoid the edicts. Could not the perilous books be esteemed certain of his?

She clasped her hands. "O God, keep me true! Let me never shelter under falsehood; let me never seek thus to evade the cross!"

Poor girl! she felt quite guilty. It is in such times of need that the soul's only refuge is in God's vast love, coupled with His constant care. Lysken prayed.

A knock at the door startled her: only a serving man from some rich burgher, carrying the psaltery of his mistress, which needed repairs. Franck assented with a grumble, though the job would bring him ready pay: he grudged labour spent on anything besides his invention.

Yet after the man had gone he stood leaning the instrument on the table, and stirring the perfect strings with one of its wooden strikers. "Lysken, I must go out to consult a friend. In good sooth I know not what to do."

The girl looked brighter. "Father, I will e'en tell the Beguine Margaret Regis. She is good and kind, as all Ghent knows; and if any one has influence over *him*——"

"The monk?" Franck shook his head. "They pride themselves, those ascetics, on being free from all ties of human love or kindred. Consider what you do. Should she plead with him and fail—the confession might be worse for us all——" He hesitated.

"Father, bid me to go," and Lysken wound her arm through his. "I know the Beguine's kind heart. She will do us no ill, if she can do no good. And I think she wishes 'the religion' well."

Lysken's apprehensions were lighter as she drew on her hood and sped away through the streets to the Beguinage. A high, blank wall surrounding looked like a convent, yet when the portress opened, inside were groups of small houses, set in gardens of vegetables and medicinal herbs, and even the humbler flowers beautifully cultivated, divided by clipped quick-set hedge or high box border each from other. Two or three large buildings overtopped the rest: one a chapel, whence issued the sound of voices singing some office of the Church; one a school, empty of pupils at this hour; one a hospital, and its convalescents, aged and infirm people, were sitting outside on benches in the evening sunshine, or creeping about the neat alleys among the gardens, like summer insects, once beautiful, once strong, nearing the chrysalis stage of weakness and torpor, with a resurrection beyond.

Most of the doors of the nuns' cottages were shut, and a grating in the panel showed how the inmate could speak to those outside if disinclined to open. But that to which Lysken bent her steps stood wide, showing a floor of neat tiles, on which shone warmly the westering beams. Also she could hear some one talking, and a childish voice repeating, while the whirr of a wheel went on.

Great was Lysken's disinclination to tell her story, now that it had come to the point. She had to confess matter enough to condemn her father with any court taking cognizance of heresy. Lingering at the door, she heard the old nun teaching a child.

"Thou knowest, little one, that our Lord was carried away to Egypt by His mother and St. Joseph, because wicked men

LYSKEN'S VISIT TO THE BEGUINE.

wanted to slay Him; and the tale goeth how that they sought shelter in a rich person's house, and were refused; while a poor workman, as a Ghent weaver belike, took him indoors.

"So let us give what Jesus asks
Without delay or grudging:
And let us pray that Jesus may
In all our hearts find lodging:
For where He's guest then goes it best
With all within the cottage;
For if He dine, the water's wine,
And angel's food the pottage!"

Such is a translation of the quaint Flemish hymn the Beguine repeated.

"To give our Lord the very best we have, always, Ulric—that's the Christian's rule. For He gave us His best when He left the glorious heaven to come down and die for us on this cold earth. Wilt not try to give Him a place in thine heart, poor boy?"

While he repeated his verse, the listener accidentally changed her position, so that a part of her shadow fell across the bright-tiled doorway.

"Come in, maiden. Ah! 'tis Lysken Franck;" and the beguine kissed her affectionately. "Go now," she said to the round-eyed child, "and weed the garden bed where you began yester-eve, and beware that you pluck up no young roots of the feverfew or tansy growing there. My poor Ulric"—he was an orphan whom the good beguine had taken up to support and train—"he offended in school hours, being dull of understanding and slow of memory. Ah me! folks have less patience with these failings of the head than with faults of the heart; and I was trying to teach him somewhat, for often I find the best way to a stupid brain lies through one's feeling, and to love our Saviour is the best learning. And now, Lysken, for thine ailment, whatever it be."

"Dear mother, must it needs be an ailment?" said the girl, with a short unmirthful laugh.

"Thy face is a tell-tale, child. Care and dread are written upon it plain," answered the beguine, perusing the fair features. Then, piecemeal forth came the trouble. Their sympathies in religious matters had hitherto been rather implied than expressed; and, after all, was not the Beguine Margaret Regis a nun, though bound by no vows except the wide one of charity? Once she had lived in the world, and been wife and mother; but her husband had been long dead, and her only son, once her hope, had suddenly disappeared from her side, and was thenceforward seen there no more. Thus alone in the world, it needed little persuasion to induce the devout and simple-minded Margaret to cast in her lot with the Beguine nuns, mixing with the outer world only to alleviate as much of its woes as she could. All this Lysken knew; and her story ended, broke from her the piteous appeal,—would she now endeavour to shield her father from any consequences of the seizure of his prohibited books?

The Beguine's wheel stopped, and she sat pondering. "I wish they made not such a coil about books. They are driving our best citizens out of the land by those placards. But I wish you came to me on other business, child. There is nought so ill to meddle with as heresy, and already the worse sort of bigots believe me tainted."

Nevertheless she sat her wheel into its corner of the tiny kitchen, and put on over her brown woollen tunice her white "faille" (fall or veil), prepared to go forth into the streets. "The person to whom I am to speak, Lysken, doubtless you know how stern he is in his duty, and how little disposed to favour 'the religion.' And what shall I say for the future—your father's future conduct—if this be passed over?"

"Madam, I cannot tell," said Lysken, her heart aching.

"Oh, good mother, you would not have him a renegade to his convictions?"

"Not I, child; but others would. I have some medicine to carry to a sick woman near by you, and so will walk with you, the rather that dark comes quickly enough after sundown in the narrow streets." She left Lysken for a few minutes, and returning, found her looking at a set of "instruments of the passion" in miniature, which lay under a box of glass joined at the edges.

"Burned long since would those have been, but they were the gift of a poor fellow I helped to heal in our hospital, and he fashioned these out of some foreign wood with a strange spicy smell. At first I liked them well enough; afterwards I had the thought, 'What, keep in honour the nails, the cross, the crown, that so cruelly tormented thy best Friend? Ah, it is in our souls we should wear His passion, and put His cross upon our sins."

"Mother Margaret, I have often wished to become a Beguine, like you. So peaceful is the life—so full of the service of God."

"Not a whit more so than thy common days can be, child," was the prompt rejoinder. "Never separate thy religion from the duties of each hour, Lysken Franck. To this end was our order instituted first, that common Christians might be banded together in a holy living, each at home. 'Praying women,' was the old name. But we have fallen on evil days, and all this is changed."

Beguine Margaret Regis spoke truth. The earliest women of her order, established in the tenth century, took no vows of poverty or perpetual celibacy, or absolute obedience, but led in their own homes, or in communities, a life of prayer and labour and charitable works. They were wholly self-maintained; they were free to marry at any time. The Low

Countries and North Germany were full of them. Matthew Paris relates that, in 1250, Cologne contained a thousand Beguines, called "seelen weiber," or soul-women.

The order was far too free to be liked by the papacy, and for a century underwent considerable persecution, until gradually it was assimilated to monastic rules. But when the Bible was unchained at the Reformation, great numbers of Beguines were among the converts.

To return to our story, from which we have for a moment digressed. Mother Margaret and Lysken departed from the convent, the nun closing but not otherwise fastening her door. Walking slowly onward, they presently reached, almost in silence, the residence of the maiden, where seeing her safely ensconced, and after an affectionate farewell, the nun proceeded on her twofold charitable errand.

Meanwhile, our carillon player had been to his friends for counsel. Citizen van Munk thought he had nothing for it but immediate flight. Burgher Schloss, being in no danger himself, marvelled he shrank from the honours of martyrdom. A third had talked largely of the ancient privileges of Ghent; as if Philip the Second had not systematically for years done his cruel pleasure, in spite of the "Joyeuse Entrée" of Brabant and all other parchments of the seventeen Netherlands.

Yet Franck returned home not so cast down. His soul was getting anchorage in the fact that a greater than the king of Spain would care for him.

"I hope you made no promise for the time to come, Lysken; for thou knowest I could not give up my Lord and Saviour, or deny His truth, not even—I think—God help me if I speak in my own miserable strength!—not even for the prison and the death!"

"Dear father!"

CHAPTER VII.

The Beguine Nun and the Augustine Monk.

MARGARET proceeded on her way. The sick woman had first to be visited, administered to, so far as her bodily wants were concerned, then comforted and cheered by gently spoken words of spiritual instruction and softly recited prayers.

Then, retracing her steps, the nun proceeded to the monastery in quest of the dreaded monk whose name had stricken with dismay her poor little Lysken. And, truth to tell, the benevolent Beguine sister well knew how beset with difficulties and dangers was the errand she had partly undertaken. She had not concealed these from Lysken, but neither had she dwelt upon them. If it were so that these hateful books had been discovered and removed as witnesses against the poor carillon-player, by the monk Guy, she knew how little hope there was of moving him to compassion. And the fact that they had been found hidden in the sacred edifice, and that their very contact had polluted the unconscious machinery daily employed in the service of Mother Church,

would probably be sufficient to close the hearts of the Augustine brotherhood against the daring transgressor, should the accusation and proofs be laid before them in conclave.

Nevertheless, Margaret Regis moved onward. The narrow streets were now almost deserted, and the gloom of a yet moonless evening was rapidly spreading around; but the veil which distinguished her as a religieuse was sufficient protection from any wayfarer whom she might meet, even if ill-disposed.

At length she reached the monastery gate, and in response to her gentle touch of the porter's bell, that official made his appearance. A well-fed aged lay brother he was, too, and kindly 'countenanced.

"If it were but he with whom I have to deal," thought Margaret, with a sigh. She knew Brother Albert of old.

"Brother Guy,—can he be spoken with?" the nun asked timidly.

"Of a certainty, no," replied the porter: "seeing that not half-an-hour since he bent his steps outward. Methinks, sister," he added, apparently recognizing the visitor,—"sister Margaret, surely?"

"I am Margaret Regis," she replied, quietly.

Brother Albert nodded: "Methinks, sister," he repeated, "had you remained within your own doors, the greater would have been your chance of seeing him; for as he passed out he mentioned that he had occasion to visit a sick man near to the Beguine convent."

Little more passed, and Margaret returned by the way she came. Was it a relief to her that her interview with the dreaded monk was, at least, postponed? Another day might do as well: a few hours' respite might enable her to put in a more compact form her arguments on the side of mercy.

The respite, whether or not welcome, was but short, however; for on opening the door of her cottage she knew that

she was not alone. The moon had risen, and by its yet faint beams she was enabled to distinguish a human figure in a monastic habit, seated near to the little table.

"Brother Guy?" she uttered, inquiringly, as she halted on the door-step.

"Yes, it is I, sister," was the somewhat cold response. "Enter, if it please you."

Margaret obeyed. Without more words she busied herself, first in kindling the flame of a small lamp that was ready to hand, then in removing her veil. Coincident with this movement on her part, the monk threw back the cowl which covered the upper part of his countenance.

"Be seated, sister," said the monk: and, as at a word of command from a superior, the nun obeyed, occupying a stool lower than the seat he had taken, and placed herself on the opposite side of the table.

Thus positioned, it might have been seen, even by the timorous Gerard Franck, had he been present at the interview, that the features of the ascetic monk insensibly assumed a softer aspect, and that some few years, at least, might be subtracted from the number which had made up his presupposed age. On the other hand, although the nun maintained her usual quiet demeanour, the interested observer might have sought in vain to solve the problem of the comparatively aged contour of her countenance. As little could he have understood the unembarrassed, unimpassioned, yet guarded tones of the conversation which ensued.

"You have sought me this evening, sister," the monk began.

"Truly, brother."

"I need not ask you why. That miserable music-monger, Gerard Franck."

"You know I have an interest in him. Yes, it was in his behalf, truly, Brother Guy."

"I, too, have an interest in him. I should be grieved to do him harm. But he has placed himself in harm's way. He has defiled the sanctuary. If, in his own dwelling, he had chosen to follow his heretical studies, his insignificance would have been his protection. But now——"

"But now, Brother Guy :—say, will the bells be less musical, their tones the less exquisitely modulated, their effect on the ears of crowds below the less grateful because undiscoverably tainted with heresy? Say that to read the Scriptures is a mighty and unpardonable crime,—but is it a crime?" asked the nun, stopping short her own supposed admissions.

"Sister, sister," said the monk, impatiently. "I know what you would say. There was a time when the common people heard Him—the blessed Potentate, the Prince of peace—gladly; and why not the common people now?"

"And why not the common people now?" echoed the clear, gentle voice of the nun, solemnly. "But this is little to the point," she added. "I know, brother, how widely our views on this matter differ; and that——"

"Hush, hush, sister," interposed the monk, nervously. "You, in your way, I, in mine, must perform our separate duties, and fulfil our several destinies. What these may be are yet unknown to us. But enough of this."

"Yes, enough for this time. But, Gerard Franck?" and the Beguine's voice dropped, for she remembered the poor man's peril, and her promise to Lysken.

"Ah, I had almost forgotten. Tell him, or tell his daughter, that he has placed himself in desperate danger. It needs only for the word to be spoken, and the Inquisition would step in and demand its victim."

"But need the word be spoken, brother?" the nun demanded, rather impatiently.

"Listen, sister: Gerard Franck's defection is as yet known

to no more than one. For a time he may escape the consequences of his—say of his imprudence. But let him know that he is closely watched. His books have been removed, so that they may not be witnesses against him: but he may some time hence be called upon to answer interrogatories which, apart from those witnesses, will be hard to be answered."

"What then can be done for him, Brother Guy?"

"Naught can be done for him but to warn him to commit himself by no overt act, but to attend to his office diligently. When the right time comes, other towns in the Low Countries will be open to him, in which comparative safety may be found. Let him know this."

"And this is all the assurance you can give?" asked the Beguine, rising to her feet.

"Truly, all," responded the Augustine, slowly copying the movement. For one moment, as was afterwards ever remembered by Margaret Regis, a strange look of intelligence, accompanied by a sorrowful smile, flashed across his countenance, and a half-extended hand seemed to be placed almost within her grasp. But the next moment the hand was hastily withdrawn, the face was cast into deep shade by the cowl which the hand busily adjusted; and with a hurriedly spoken Benedicite, the visitor passed over the cottage threshold, and was, in a brief space of time, lost to sight.

Then, and not till then, the Beguine sister gave way to emotions hitherto suppressed.

"Why, oh, why are we ever to meet and part thus? why am I doomed ever to be childless—childless!"

She bowed her head, and wept passionate tears; but in her own distress, whatever the cause, the widow nun did not lose sight of her friend Lysken. Early on the following day, she delivered the monk's message as she received it. It carried a little, but not much, comfort with it.

CHAPTER VIII.

In the Market Place.

THE Vrydags Markt, otherwise Friday Market, in Ghent was the busiest scene of that busy city on the day of the week whence it took its name. From first breaking of dawn a stream of peasants and farmers flowed through the gates, bringing country produce. Such dainty butter, such amber cheeses, such pails of cream, such masses of cheap vegetables were sold in no other land of that age; for in the Low Countries were deep alluvial pastures, and the people had invented two things scarcely known through the rest of Europe—dairies of wonderful cleanliness, and garden husbandry.

About the square stood ancient houses of lofty proportions: the majority presenting those curious stepped gables characteristic of Flemish domestic architecture of olden periods. Here were also halls of some of the guilds and crafts, which had once been all powerful in Ghent, and even still exercised considerable influence. The butchers had a house like a castle, built of red and white bricks and containing noble state rooms, business

rooms, banquet rooms. The masons possessed a mansion for which a fresh ornament had to be planned and executed (with his own hand) by each elected dean of their craft. The arbalestriers or crossbowmen, the fullers, the curriers, the cordwainers, the mariners,—trades too numerous to mention, met in the square of the Friday Market, whenever they held congresses on public matters. Many a scene of wild excitement had the old houses looked down upon; many a civic battle ending in blood: for generation after generation the Counts of Flanders received brilliant inauguration here; and their great opponents, the Van Arteveldts, were here chosen leaders of the Commons of Ghent—the famous White-Hoods. Later than all this historic repute came scenes the worst, yet noblest: the Vrydags Markt, like our London Smithfield, had a spot sacred to the ashes of martyrs.

How many men and women here gave up their lives for the cause of truth and freedom, who shall tell? Incessantly in the martyrologies of the time occur entries so terribly concise and suggestive as these:—"Twelve at Gant, 1559;"—"eighteen or twenty Baptists this year, 1560, at Antwerp and Gant, seven of whom were women;"—"1562, five men and five women at Gant;"—"1563, suffered for their religion at Gant, a mother and her son, two sisters, a mother and her daughter; and again, a man and two women." These are the obscurer sufferers, whose names are recorded in no earthly register: whose death was attended with no incident remarkable enough to make a paragraph for the historian; but the highest heroism of human nature, the strongest faith in the Unseen and Eternal, must have animated their breasts. It is needless to do what were easy, to lengthen the bloody list; for this sort of thing had been going on in every Netherland town of note since 1523, when the protomartyrs of Belgium, Henri Voes and Jan Esch, died in the

flames at Brussels, singing with their last breath—"Te Deum laudamus."

On the present Friday in July, 1566, a few days following that which witnessed the conference described in the last chapter, the Vrydags Markt was neither a place of popular amusement, nor patriotic exhibition, nor public execution; but had reverted to its original purposes of buying and selling. It was lined with booths and stalls of various sizes, some having gay-striped awnings, some shaded by an erection like an (ante-dated) umbrella of clumsiest make.

Two women differing in age, but in both of whom we are interested, having filled their baskets with housekeeping stuff, were about returning home, when their attention and that of all others in the market-place was attracted by a sort of procession riding into it. Horsemen with lances first, and the Spanish king's standard in the wind: men-at-arms with their steel cuirasses bright as mirrors, magistrates in robes and trimmings of miniver. The latter wore also the ornamental knotted cord round their throats, intended to remind the municipality for ever of Charles the Fifth's clemency in not hanging them all, on one occasion, when they asserted their rights as freeborn Flemings.

Trumpeters blared loudly as the procession stopped at the cross in the middle of the square, and the principal magistrate opened a roll of parchment.

"Some new placard from Her Highness," said a thin-faced weaver near Lysken in the crowd. For a crowd had gathered fast from all points, to hear what now it might be the pleasure of their rulers to do unto them. "I pray God," added the weaver, "it be gentler than the last."

"What! wouldest have any milder than the merciful murderation?" rejoined a bystander in a mocking tone, "Thou'rt hard to please, friend!"

The substance of the new edict was as follows :—

A fresh prohibition of all conventicles and unlawful assemblies, both public and private, on pain of hanging to the preachers and teachers, and the forfeiture of their estates to the behoof and advantage of those that should apprehend them : and in case they had no estates, then the persons who caused them to be taken should receive from His Majesty's treasurer, a reward of six hundred pounds Flemish money, reckoning forty Flemish groats to the pound. In the same manner were to be treated all such as furnished and provided places for preaching and teaching. They who harboured or concealed those preachers were to be punished with death; and those who were found at any such meetings should be punished at the discretion of the judges ; with regard, however, to their different ranks and qualities, as likewise whether they went thither out of mere curiosity, or whether armed to defend the preachers; for in the latter case they were to be banished.

A running fire of underhand popular commentary accompanied the slow and pompous reading of the Regent's proclamation, such as—"Forfeit the preachers' estates, quotha! How much goods or lands hath Master Herman Stryker, or Frans Junius, or Jan Arentzoon, who have given up all for the Gospel? Think they it is dealing with fat priests they be?"

"If Her Highness has made it six thousand Flemish pounds, she shall not have the preachers. Our lives first!"

"'Punished after the discretion of the judges'—know ye what that means, good people? Lately our duchess advised the inquisitors to be modest and discreet in their office. Part of it was the drowning men in prison, head tied between knees. Mine own uncle died after that fashion. Which of you is ready to suffer the like, to pleasure Her Highness and the bishops?"

"Beware of your words, friend," said a well-dressed person, wearing a medal of the Virgin in his felt hat. "Less than you have spoken has cost a man his ears, as a sower of sedition." And a wrangle ensued.

"Ho!" said another, who had listened to the end; "but it is a shade gentler than former placards. The governor of Tournay declares that every man, woman, and child, who goes to the preaching is liable to die for that bare fact; and here is proclaimed only banishment."

"Banishment, forsooth!" rejoined the first speaker; "would they banish the whole nation of Flanders? That would not serve their turn. Many a one of us would like well enough a free passage to England, where folk may preach and hearken as they list."

"Ay, that they may," said a young sailor, who had pressed himself forward within the last few minutes. "I, a Ghent-man born, and not in your streets an hour agone, after long travel, have seen enough contrast already to make me shame-faced of my English mates; and this morning's work not least."

He was working his way further through the crowd when a woman's hand caught his arm.

"Karl!"

"Lysken!" Then and there he embraced her. "Good folk, I am just off a two years' voyage to the Spanish Indies, and need crave no pardon for gladness to see my sister," he said to the bystanders. And who was happier than Lysken as she clung to his strong hand?

"So brown, Karl" (thus she talked when they got beyond the crowd); "so sunburnt as you are, and with those outlandish yellow rings in your ears, and your long hair—I would not have known you, I think, but for the voice. How delighted our father will be!"

"Ay, dear old father! Playing the carillons still? Is his box of music any nearer finishing?—I have a letter for him from my uncle in Antwerp, who, by the way, never was so gracious."

"You came through Antwerp?"

"Our cargo was consigned there. Ah, Lysken, that's a city! Ghent is asleep. But as soon as I could, I travelled hither by Trekschuyt. And you are to come back with me—our uncle wants us all to pay him a visit."

"Our grand burgher uncle?"

"Even so. He has a very splendid mansion, and young ladies of daughters, fine enough for countesses, I warrant you."

"Karl, you frighten me more and more. Oh, Karl!" suddenly remembering, and checking his march.

"What ails now?"

She had quite forgotten the friend with whom she came to market, the Vrouw van Muler. But looking round, they saw that the patient woman had extricated herself from the crowd, and was walking quietly along at a little distance behind; and, moreover, was carrying both baskets—Lysken's, abandoned in her eagerness, and her own.

"I am ashamed of myself!"

"Nay, child, it was a rare joy," said the widow. "No wonder you should forget."

Karl took his place as the burden-bearer, and they proceeded through the Mannekens Street, where lies the enormous cannon of hammered iron, made and used in the days of Philip the Good. Before a blank convent wall nearly opposite, a crowd had assembled; there was considerable merriment and a pressing to the front for good places; doubtless something was to be seen, and Karl must see it.

He came back laughing, after a lengthened stare "An

excellent caricature, dame! Done by no unskilful hand either: there be a whole company of geese, being men with geese's heads, and a fox in monk's cowl and frock marshalling them all up towards a great fire prepared for cooking; in the corner is an old fellow looking on, whose square cap beareth the name Erasmus, and he saith: 'Purgatory is the fire they so dearly love, for it keeps their kettle boiling.'"

The widow turned pale and caught Lysken's skirt. "Come on, come on," she said, hurriedly. "'Tis no right subject for a jest;" but the young sailor could not see the incongruity.

"Why may not true men laugh at lies? and these portrayals are common enough, or were in my time, two years ago. Only, I would scarce be in his place that made the design, if he be discovered by any worshipful bloodhound."

It was the fact that such pictorial pasquinades, drawn with brush or charcoal in fresco style, or previously prepared and pasted on the walls, were very popular among the Flemings, and equally detested by the Church and the government. Since early morning had this rude drawing amused a never-ending concourse, some of whom seemed to constitute themselves a guard for its protection. Conjectures were rife as to the author. When the Widow .van Muler went home, and laid out the brown loaf and cheese for her son Hans at his "none-mete," or supper, and had seen him eat his portion with good appetite—she came at once to the root of the matter.

"My boy, art weary of thy young life so soon, as to cast it away for a gaping crowd?"

He flushed violently. "I did not think you would ha' known it, mother; surely you never saw——"

"That other night when your light burned so late, and I came to remind you of the hour, I saw those words about purgatory as you engrossed them, in great clear letters:

methought it was some plans for the printers. But awhile ago it returned upon me. And I knew you to be an indifferent good draughtsman."

"Mother, I could not resist when I read the words as I was printing—I seemed to see so clear the whole scene! And no one knows of it but myself; I took counsel with none; though I could not choose but laugh in my sleeve as I mixed with the people and heard their comments. Quoth one burgher, 'Master Erasmus was able enough for stinging speeches; but like a finger-post, he only showed the right way, and walked not in it himself: he is well set in the corner.' Quoth another, 'I have been paying a ducat monthly for dead masses, and I'll pay no longer.' Mother," added the youth in a graver tone, "do you not think some persons might be moved to the truth by my picture?"

"My lad," she answered, "'tis not for me to say what weak instrument the Almighty may use to break the fetters of the papacy from any soul; but I fear me many a one will cast off purgatory who wins not heaven."

"Well, mother, my secret is safe with you, I know;" and with that he set his cap on one side of his flaxen hair, and kissed her hand in the respectful manner of the time, ere he went back to the printing office. Edging towards the Mannekens Street again, with intention to enjoy more of his secret triumph, his good-humoured face lengthened considerably to find that the city guards had torn down his cartoon, and were dispersing the spectators amid energetic brawling.

CHAPTER IX.

Karl.

THAT pasquinade on the convent wall, and indeed all other occurrences of the morning, were quite forgotten by Lysken in her marvellous meeting with Karl. Scarce could she believe that here he was, her sailor brother, the hero of her thoughts, back from the mysterious seas of the New World, from the islands of spice, and dusky savages, and golden sands.

Her uncle's letter was likewise an absorbing subject. No trivial sheet of note-paper, as in these degenerate days of penny postage, but a large quarto of corded yellow paper, thick as vellum, with the address,—

"To mine honoured brother, Master Gerard Franck, at his house in Ghent,—by the hands of his son, with speed," read the carillon player, with much emotion. And when the silken string and the abundant wax were undone, they found it contained a warm invitation that the whole family should visit the writer.

"But your uncle is rarely changed," continued Franck, turning over the sheet in a puzzled way; "he having risen in

the world, even to the dignity of burgher, had heretofore no welcome for poor relations."

"Does he not tell the cause?" inquired Karl. "He has become one of the Reformed; and that which was a crime in his eyes when he heard it of you, father, is now a new tie of brotherhood."

"He hints something, but defers explanation till we meet. Now God be praised if that be really so! My brother Floris one of the Reformed! Who would have thought it, so swallowed up in this world's gear as he seemed! God be praised!"

The carillon player rose from his seat, and bared his head as he looked upwards in gratitude, his blue eyes full of feeling. "And my brother Floris was always so wise, so clever," he said.

"Somewhat has befallen him to change his tempers greatly," observed Karl; "for he paid all the wage of his seamen without a grumble, he that was a proverb for hardness; and though he was used to pass me by with a cold nod, he came near and put his hand upon me, father-like, and brought me to his house; where I saw the grand young ladies I told you of, Lysken, all in ruff and farthingale of the newest fashion, playing the lute, and a certain new-fangled French instrument they call the spinet, so please you."

Respecting the build and mechanism of this new instrument the carillon player was very curious; but his sailor son could not describe more than the shape. "Come and see it for yourself, sir; and a handsome house into the bargain. Why, father, this little place is scarce fit to be its porter's lodge," said Karl, looking round.

"I hope there's no danger of any of them coming here," rejoined Lysken, quickly.

"No, my dear. The young ladies would be just as much

ashamed of our humble habitation as you could be, unless I much misjudge them,—all except Nina,—sweet, pale Nina."

"Which is she?"

"Oh, a sick one, whom the others flout. 'Tell Cousin Lysken I shall love her, if she comes,' she whispered me at parting. But her sisters asked the colour of your hair and eyes, and what was your height, and whether you could play music or dance a coranto,—in fact, whether you would be a rival to them."

"I doubt my brother has not brought up his lasses well," observed Gerard Franck. "'Twere unmannerly those close inquiries, unless from love. But I dare affirm my Lysken's fingers would excel their best on the lute."

"I hope, I am sure, it may never come to the trial," said Lysken, heartily.

"You would not be for this visit, then?"

"Wait a little space, father."

"Now will she set about a-rigging of her finery," quoth Karl, mischievously. "Spare thyself, little one; their handmaids have grander fashions than thou. Yet would I prefer my Lysken in a coif of pure linen to my fine-lady cousins' frizzled heads stuck with shining gewgaws."

The pulling of his hair which the first part of his speech brought on him was exchanged for a most amiable smoothing down of the same as he ended it. "Thou art a dear Karl still," said his gratified sister. "I'll think no more of them, or only of kind Nina. But tell me—tell me of thy travels. Is it true in the far Indies there be butterflies carrying a burning light as soon as the dark comes,—like moving stars among the trees?"

This and many other marvels he related to her. How gorgeous birds, the size of bees, hummed among vast pinnacles of flowers tall as a ship-mast; how fishes glided through the

sea, and at sight of an enemy sprang into the air, winged! Hardly was this to be credited; nor that he had never seen that common wonder of the ocean, in which everybody believed—a mermaid combing her yellow hair, and singing a sweet song, while floating on the restless waves.

How happy was the family that day! Ay, though they were under the cloud of Lutheranism, and exposed to an indefinite number of pains and penalties. Matter enough lay against Franck for his arrest at any time. Not but Karl made very light of the prohibited books missing from the tower. Fearless by nature, and more fearless by the habit of his profession, danger should be very palpable ere he recognised it.

"I'll get up to that tower my own self, and pull a joy-bell for the triumphant return of Karl Franck, master mariner," spoke the youth, playfully.

"Nay, do you that, father; play very happy carillons to-night for Karl!" And as it was asked, so was it afterwards performed.

Brother and sister stood in the street, and listened to the glad notes raining down among the circling swallows.

Then the two families must be together, sharers of the pleasures of re-union. The Van Mulers assembled in Franck's tiled kitchen to sup on the best dainties Lysken could prepare on so short a notice, with Karl (who, sailor-like, could turn his hand to anything) for her able assistant.

When the father came in, after an absence so lengthened as to cause Lysken some vague uneasiness, he had great news.

"Nay, my dear, but I have been at burgher Van Munk's, hearing all about the struggles of the Reformed at Antwerp. The Prince of Orange himself is there."

"Ay, I could have told you that," observed Karl. "I saw

his entry. I should have been home a couple of days sooner but for it. Folk were all so demented about him, the public boat stopped for a holiday, and I could get no passage."

"And you never mentioned it," said his father, half reproachfully. "Like a sailor, forgetful."

"Nay, and how was I to know you cared? And this young woman had rather hear of the lantern-flies of San Domingo. Well, a right worshipful seignior is he as ever I beheld, and a right royal clamour they made about him."

"Good cause have they," interposed Franck. "If any man saves us from the Inquisition it will be the Prince of Orange, —so burgher Van Munk says."

"I can tell you, then, the Prince did not like the demonstration. More than once and again he checked the people, and would have none of their shouting 'Long live the Beggars.' It is credibly affirmed that he said to Count Brederode that he would make all men unlearn that mischievous watchword."

"Rightly. The drinking and dicing of Brederode and his company show them unfit to put a hand to the ark of God."

"By the way, that same watchword puzzled me not a little, till mine uncle explained. Quoth I, Flemings were not wont much to admire beggary, but rather thrift and opulence. Quoth he, this is only a nickname the Duchess's councillors gave to the gentlemen who presented her with a request that she would abate the Inquisition. Quoth I, then I'm one of the Gueux already, being a beggar both ways,—by nature, not owning a stiver; and by principle, in that I would abate the Inquisitors by hanging them up."

"Softly, son." Franck went to the outer door, looked up and down the little street, and duly drew the bolts behind him.

"What, you have eavesdroppers and spies in Ghent? Well, I am accustomed to the license of the high seas, with no ear nearer you than some shore away a thousand miles."

The youth Hans van Muler heaved a sigh.

"Would you like the life? Come, my credit is good enough to find you a berth in the old caravel at her next outfitting."

With a quick glance at his mother,—"No, no; I like the printing well. There is scarce a nobler employ on earth, methinks."

"Every man to his liking," responded the brawny young sailor, shrugging his shoulders. "Free air and free life for me."

"Thou art shut up in a wooden prison afloat for months, and canst not get out on peril of drowning," put in his father, with a sly smile.

"Even so, sir," said Karl, slightly disconcerted. "But you wanted to hear of the Prince of Orange. All Antwerp was on the road to meet him,—at least, all that was not packed in the streets, or lining the ramparts, or piled on the roofs of houses."

"Where were you, Karl?"

"In my uncle's balcony; and right well he looked, riding among the merchants in his suit of velvet, escorting the Prince."

"Oh, Karl, what is he like?"

"My uncle? A stout old gentleman."

"You surely mistake," said the carillon player. "When I knew my brother, he was slim as a poplar."

"I asked what the Prince of Orange was like," said Lysken, laughing.

"Ah! woman's curiosity! As gallant a nobleman as you could wish to behold; dark hair and moustache, and beard peaked, as I shall wear mine—when I have one; clear brown eyes, with a world of thinking in them; and when he lifted his plumed cap to bow, a forehead wide enough to hold brains for us all. The sight of him, riding so calm and silent among that storm of voices, somehow it stilled me,—I could shout

no more. He's a man for doing more than for saying—mark me in that."

"And knows the value of the people's acclaim : 'tis wisdom," said Franck.

"Would make a noble admiral to sail into strange seas with, and trust utterly, through storms and shoals, and pirates and mutiny!" was Karl's enthusiastic judgment.

"'Tis an instinct towards our natural protector makes so many men deem thus of him, as the burgher says."

"What is the Prince's business in Antwerp at this present?" asked the Widow van Muler, raising her face from her lace-work.

"It seems he is burgrave of the city by hereditary right; and the Duchess-regent besought him to go thither at this juncture, and compose the differences between the magistracy and the Reformed, who have been holding public meetings in all directions. Verily it was thought there would have been broken heads but for his coming; and my uncle says he will procure liberty of worship in the suburbs, at least."

"Burgher van Munk had it that he called together the corporation of ward-masters, the deans of trades, even the guilds of 'rhetoric,' to consult with them,—a very proper respect for all classes of the citizens," added Gerard Franck.

"Oh, if it were to be settled by their will, the issue could not be doubtful: the Reformed are six to one throughout Flanders, according to my uncle. But truly if it be so, never were a majority more put upon. Why they don't rise, and fling these tyrannical churchmen over the dykes——"

"Karl, Karl, you will assuredly be lodged in some dungeon, if you don't have a care!"

And it was just then that everybody heard distinctly the steady march of several men approaching the house.

CHAPTER X.

A Narrow Escape.

EVERY face whitened at the sound,—that of the widow was death-like. "Oh my son!" she uttered, in a suppressed voice, for the tread of the armed men had stopped; and knocking at the opposite door followed.

Hans stood up, scarcely knowing what he did. "It's the provost's men, of course. I'll go. I'll tell them——"

"Are you mad? What's this about?" asked Franck, whose own heart quaked, for a good reason why. "What has the boy done?"

The mother explained in a few words. "Hide him at once," said Karl. "Father, there used to be a hollow place under the tiling above your workshop and a way to the roof. Stay quiet all of you. Hans and I can manage it."

The young sailor seemed quite in his element during the emergency. He would not take a light up-stairs, lest it should be noticed by the enemy outside. The noise of breaking in the door opposite did not flurry him; he coolly went on piling the furniture for Hans' retreat.

"I wonder if they will ask questions here. So it was you that made that picture on the wall. Very clever, Hans; but I fear me you wore the goose's head yourself when you stuck it up. Somebody must have seen you. Well, I hope they'll have the pleasure of a good hunt for you, and no find." So spoke Karl, as he led the way.

"Oh, my poor mother! I care not but for her!"

"And she cares not but for you. Climb now, like a cat. Lie down flat on the outer tiling, and do not stir till I call you."

The provost's men had struck a light, and were ransacking the poor little house opposite, with a due disregard of property. Every cupboard was dashed open, every bed pierced with a rapier, all books and papers jealously gathered and confiscated. Neighbours, roused up, could not, or did not choose to tell anything. Karl himself promptly answered the summons at his father's door. That day come home from beyond seas, what could he be expected to know of a printer's apprentice who never stirred out of Ghent? And if the sergeant liked to see his discharge from his ship, the Royal Philip of Antwerp——

"Nay, sailor is writ plain enough on thy visage and in thy speech," said the soldier, first glancing in-doors on what seemed to be a frightened family circle. And they went their way empty-handed and growling.

Karl came in, closed the door carefully, and, as the footfalls became more distant, he began silently and exultingly to dance.

"Cease, thou wild fellow!" exclaimed his father, sternly.

"Sir, the women be ready to faint,—the Vrouw van Muler and my sister Lysken. I want to give a shock to their feelings the other way. Now to make them laugh were an incongruous shock at present. And I do fain believe that,

had I not been here, Hans would have walked out into the snare of the fowler. It reminds me of a story I had from mine uncle in Antwerp, about Red-rod [1] meeting an inquisitor. 'How,' quoth he, 'how is it that you, so slenderly attended, durst arrest heretics, while I exercise my office at peril of my life, though well guarded and armed?' 'Ah,' answered the inquisitor, 'I have nothing to fear; for my business is only to take good people, who bear no arms, nor make any resistance.' 'Well,' replied Red-rod, 'if you take all the good men, and I all the bad, we shall stock the prisons bravely between us!'

"But now you want to be sure that Hans is safe." So saying, Karl went up to the hiding-place, presently returning with his friend, who was received as one alive from the dead, with tears and solemn gladness.

"And when I am questioned to-morrow, as I am well assured the matter will not be let rest here," asked the distressed mother, "what can I say?—what can I do?"

"Say nothing,—do nothing," counselled Karl. "Surely they could never be so barbarous as to expect you to bear witness against your own son? Belike they had mothers themselves, some time or other!"

"They scruple not at any means," said Franck. "There was a very ancient woman at Courtrai, and she was brought before the Grand Inquisitor of Flanders, the Dean of Rouen—"

"Trouble not to tell me his hateful name, sir," interposed Karl, with energetic gesture. "One of the crew of wretches who shed innocent blood,—that will do."

"My Karl, thy tongue is a fire. The inquisitor told her that she had forfeited life and estate, according to the Placards,[2] because she had harboured her own son, Daniel Verkampt, a

[1] An officer of justice so called.

[2] The edicts of Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second for the suppression of heresy were popularly so called.

heretic. 'My lords,' said she, 'am I to forfeit life and estate for sheltering mine own son, whom I bore in his infancy, and educated with great trouble and charge?—who is neither rogue nor thief, but was counted the most hopeful young man in our village!—only because you say he is a heretic? Indeed, my lords, if I could have borne this my son once more, and brought him up again with the same trouble, and pain, and care,—you ought to know how freely I would undergo all, to hide him from you safely.' The judges were so moved with her eloquence, that they set her free."

"Ah, there was something human in them still. But no matter,—I'll cut the knot in this case; for his mother shan't know where he is, nor any of you. Only all must hold their peace. If Ghent be so full of spies as my father thinks, they will surely watch the street."

Next evening, in the dusk, the brother and sister, as it seemed, left Franck's house, walking handed, as was common with such near relations, and without molestation directed their steps towards the barges on the nearest canal.

CHAPTER XI.

Nina and her Home.

THERE was a small terraced court-yard attached to burgher Floris Franck's handsome house in Antwerp, ornamented with evergreens shapen like monsters, and a round fountain in the midst. Beds of tulips, brilliant as jewelled stripes edging a grey robe, lay four-square in the stone pavement; and on the brink of the water stood a large white stork, resting on one leg as a pillar, the other inscrutably hidden, and his beak and head turned back between the feathered cushions of his wings.

"I wonder how old he is!" said a pallid-faced girl, reclining on a couch within the room, by an open window, and having in her hands some needle-work. "He looks so wise, or so stupid, I don't know which; but he might be any age."

"Ay—young people are apt to think the old ones stupid, until they find out that sobriety is wisdom," rejoined an elderly woman-servant, who had somewhat more than the suspicion of a soft moustache, and was engaged in arranging the cushions of Nina's couch.

"Come now, Ursel, I can't let you be cross. Like a good Ursel, finish this little wrapping-coat I was making for Widow Dirkson's baby. Ah me! I know not why my fingers so soon are weary, even in the service of God's poor."

"Easy enough to tell," tartly observed the old servant, "after two hours' striving like a seamstress; and that very thing brought me out o' doors."

"Sit down then, and I shall read to you. See! that stork positively winks at me with his wonderful old eye, as if defying me to make him out."

"None of the neighbours remember any time that his nest was not up there," said Ursel, glancing at the many-gabled roof. "And if he were to fly away—oh, the bad omen!"

"Ursel, I don't believe in omens. Do you think God lets the birds of the air know what is going to happen?"

"The greatest calamity that has befallen my master's house since I knew him, the stork was missing for a whole day. You know that, Mistress Nina."

"Except, that I don't think what happened a calamity, dear Ursel; nor do you, unless when you have been talking to my Aunt Philippa."

For this house, like many another of the period, was divided against itself in the religious way: the sister of burgher Franck's deceased wife adhering tenaciously to the ancient faith, while the three daughters followed their father.

"How will it turn out, Mistress Nina, how will it all end? That's the question of people who have lived as long as I have, and Madam Philippa," said the old servant, pursing up her lips wisely.

"Well, Ursel, I am sure you are right to look at the ending. Only, I would take the longest view, if I were you. I would look at the other life as well as this one. I would do whatever was best for the eternal life."

"And as Madam Philippa says, the grand old Church, with all its popes, and emperors, and kings, giving place to a scurvy company of weavers, and armourers, and dyers, and the like! Mistress Nina, they do say——"

"What?" when she hesitated.

"Nay, 'twill anger ye. 'Twas only that they say Master Franck would not be so ready among the Reformed, an he were nobly born."

Nina sighed, while a little natural flush came over her. "I remember the gospel where it says 'Not many noble.' So it is quite true, Ursel."

"Not but some think that ranks will get a great upsetting in the next world; and I for my part think noble is that noble does, most times."

Her young mistress seemed to wish for no more conversation; she took up a small book lying at her side, and began to read some of the devout musings of the pious Thomas à Kempis,—in his *Imitation of Jesus Christ.* After a page or two she ceased, and began to sing in a low sweet voice a Flemish version of St. Bernard's glorious "Hymn on the Perpetuity of Joy in Heaven."

> "Hic breve vivitur, hic breve plangitur, hic breve fletur;
> Non breve vivere, non breve plangere, retribuetur."

Englished in many shapes: notably in that which begins—"Brief life is here our portion."

As she went on in the verses, heart seemed to warm and voice to expand, till it was as the music of a bird, clear, thrilling, seeming to descend from heavenly places, rather than rise from earth. The delicate face became bright, all lassitude faded out of it; the large eyes waxed luminous, spirit had conquered the clog of matter for a space: Nina felt no longer weak, sickly, shrunken—she had looked into the

glory of the future, she was within the "ageless walls" of the city built up with jasper and amethyst, where "the Lamb is all the splendour."

And old Ursel, whose thoughts had never got farther than her seam during the reading of a book, being accustomed to set down all printed matter as too deep for her,—she had actually a tear stealing down her withered cheek.

"What, Ursell, crying! And it makes me so happy!"

"Ay, and another person also, Mistress Nina," said a strange voice behind the couch. "I never heard such music," added the young man emphatically.

"Oh, Cousin Karl!" and all the earth-shadows were about her again. "I thought you were in Ghent!"

"So I was, but I've come back to ask a favour. There's a young townsman with me for whom I want friendliness and shelter, and your father is absent."

"He and my sisters are at a preaching. But my Aunt Philippa——"

"Is gone to her devotions at Our Lady's; this being St. Rumbold's day," interposed old Ursel.

"Inform her of the visitors as soon as she returns. Such welcome as I can give your friend, Cousin Karl, he hath heartily."

Karl went to the door of the arcade, skirting the court-yard, brought back Hans van Muler, and introduced him with a few words. "I desired the serving-man to leave us when I heard you singing, Cousin Nina. I wish you would sing again."

"No: I cannot sing hymns merely to amuse people. But where is your sister, the Lysken that you promised me?"

When answer was given, and in family talk the stranger was overlooked, she turned to him with shy courtesy, where he stood cap in hand, thinking, verily, what a good initial letter

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for a piece of printing monsieur stork would make, cut upon wood, as was typographers' fashion at that time.

"This young gentleman is skilled in printers' work, you say?" she held out to Hans her copy of *The Imitation.* "I have heard that good judges admire this little book, sir."

The youth took it with an obeisance. "True, my lady; it is Venetian printing of the finest—worthy of Aldus himself: And oh! the illuminations!"

A blush at his own enthusiasm was plainly perceptible through his fair skin. "Illuminations by the pen and brush. What clear colouring! A rare hand indeed, lady."

"Some of the work you would like, Hans?" observed Karl, patronisingly. And as the old servant had gone to see for Madam Philippa's return, he informed Nina wherefore the young man needed protection.

"Yet if it were to do again, I would not do it; 'twere but a boy's freak," said Hans. "And I stood not alone, but must bring sharp trouble upon others, and for no good reason. It was not as if I were suffering simply for the truth's sake."

"That were worth while?" asked Nina.

"Truly, surely; best worth doing in all the world, madam," said the printer's apprentice.

She smiled in a satisfied way, after a minute's study of his open countenance.

"I want him to get into a caravel I know of, shipping for the Florida seas, where be as yet no inquisitors," said the sailor; "but he wills not to leave the Netherlands nor his calling, and says there be none nobler, forsooth: which in truth I comprehend not," added travelled and illiterate Karl, with slight contempt.

"What say you for your calling, Master van Muler?" asked Nina, leaning her cheek on her hand.

"Scarce worthy am I to praise it, madam; yet methinks

the world was darkened before printing came: does it not give a thousand voices to the writer, for his one aforetime? does it not speak without a sound to the hearts of men, and move them like trumpets? And publishes God's Word so that all the kings of the earth might as well essay to stop the daylight spreading——"

Enter Madam Philippa, stiff and starched as her own ruff, with Book of Hours and rosary in hand; at sight of which Hans thought he had got again into the enemy's camp. Of course she would salute any visitor brought by her brother's nephew (herewith a sweeping curtsey); but strangers were too much for Nina, and she must invite them to the withdrawing-room of the family, where Karl found the dignity of the Catholic lady so overwhelming, that he presently concluded he would brave any danger of recognition, either of himself or Hans, which might exist in the public thoroughfares, rather than endure it longer.

* * * * *

The quays and docks, where lay ships, and his mates would be met, and Hans tempted to a seafaring life, were Karl's object; but not a step could he bring Hans past the great cathedral. What a tower! what a spire! In the wide world could there be such another? The point of the frozen lacework seemed to pierce the far sky. They passed it a few yards round a corner, owing to Karl's remonstrances that they might be observed with suspicion; but Hans walked back again as if half dazed; a needle to the magnet was his artist-nature to that sublime architecture. And then descended the carillon of the hour, music from its hundred bells.

"Well, let us go within, if you are determined to travel no further," said Karl, good-humouredly. "Better be moon-stricken before few witnesses than many;" and they entered.

A five-fold nave of clustered columns rose into dim distance above their heads, and stretched before them in vistas that seemed illimitable. When details could be looked at, it was perceived that Art had pleased itself with devising every variety of ornament for capital and finial; the mighty windows were sheets of jewelled mosaic. Centuries had piled up wealth in the scores of chapels and shrines; precious things crusted the very walls.

"In good sooth, but the place reminds me of a tropic forest in the Caribbeans," whispered Karl—"so dim and vast-like, so far aloft—and strange creatures looking at you out of the boughs," and he pointed to a grotesque gargoyle.

"Oh, that it were a temple of the living God!" sighed the young printer.

"And not of a dead woman," added Karl. "Ay, here's the big blot;" as they came before the colossal image of the Virgin, whence the cathedral was named Nôtre Dame. Her dress stiff with seed pearls, her very shoes blazing with a rainbow light of gems, her jewellery worth a royal ransom; how amazed would have been humble-minded Mary of Nazareth, could she see her modern representative!

Other people were wandering about, or worshipping in the great circles. A little peering man drew near.

"You don't bow to her, messieurs," jerking his thumb disrespectfully towards the image. "No more do I. And we both know the reason, do we not?"

He waited for no answer. It was just a sample of the public free speech, expressed where safe; a bubble to show the tide which was rising against graven images, and in less than a month from that date would sweep them all away.

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Madam Philippa relaxed her stony demeanour at the warm

praise given her grand cathedral by the young stranger. "It is the pride of the Catholic world," she declared. "Our late Emperor Charles, whom the saints protect!—he compared the fretwork to lace of Malines. A hundred years was that tower in building—four feet of progress only in each year—think of that! And within—saw you the chapels of the twenty-six guilds? the banners of the Golden Fleece? Bah! the new religion deeming to overcome that splendour."

"My lady, the apostles had none of it," ventured Hans.

A well-bred stare put him down. "Oh, you are of the mechanic sect—I had forgotten:" and not a word more, though scrupulous as to the honours of the table. Simple Hans was well nigh overcome with these already, never having supped with a burgher's family before, or seen the state affected by their class. Silver flagons of beer to each one, from the tall beaufets against the wall covered with tankards and beakers and salvers shining again; but Floris Franck himself drank ale from a brown bowl of Dinant ware. Hippocras and other spiced drinks were at the service of the guests, rose-water bathed their hands.

Other company was at supper that evening, which Madam Philippa specially disliked,—Huguenot friends from the field-meeting, chief among them the Dauphinese preacher, Peregrine de Lagrange. Nothing but a keen unwillingness to resign the headship of her brother's handsome house kept her playing the hostess to guests so distasteful.

Burgher Franck, an energetic, practical man, was full of the news of the day. "It is necessary in these times," he explained to his nephew, "to make a protest, and show one's colours; so we all went to the preaching, the larger number the better, and beyond doubt we had a multitude! When our burgrave the Prince legalised Reformed meetings in Antwerp suburbs, our congregations fell off somewhat."

Madam Philippa smiled triumphantly. "So much for political excitement, and opposition to established authority," said she, picking to pieces a sugar confection. "Be those your animating principles, forsooth!"

The burgher turned his broad shrewd kindly face on her withered sour one, and went on: "When rumour had it that the Sheriff of Brabant was gathering troops to put us down, the congregations swarmed forth again, carrying arms. I do not relish the carrying of arms, Pastor Lagrange!"

The person to whom he spoke was not sympathetic on this point. Filled with the fiery blood of the south, he was known to gallop to his field-preaching, and fire a pistol as the signal for attention, and then discourse with a native eloquence and fervour that melted all listeners.

"The weapons are right, burgher." he answered. "I am satisfied with the Master's declaration, when He said He came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. Our life must be a battle: we did not accept the gospel for ease or sloth."

"And yet Christ's kingdom is not of this world. And He said to Peter, Put up thy sword."

"Because all that take it perish with it. I look for nought else. These are no times for Christian ministers to die in their beds. They must set the example, fight in the fore-front, lead up to the breach, walk to the mouth of the culverins, though roaring. What! shall we look for easier lives and softer deaths than Paul or Peter?

A year after those words were remembered, when news came that the dauntless Dauphinese pastor had been put to death at Valenciennes. He received the condemnation "as if it had been an invitation to a marriage feast," and on the scaffold proclaimed that "he was slain for having preached the pure Word of God to a Christian people in a Christian land." And so Peregrine de Lagrange went to his crown.

CHAPTER XII.

In Hiding.

THE Burgher Franck had risen to his present position by indefatigable industry, as well as ability; by neglecting no trifle, and in all things following that code of intuitive maxims which have ever guided successful men. About noon on the following day he might have been seen going to a street dark with stores and warehouses, where he was known to have a house packed with goods, and stopped at a small door on the edge of a canal. To the very step of the threshold flowed the dark deep water. He knocked, or rather rubbed with his fingers, and after some short pause was admitted by a one-armed sailor.

"Alles gaet wel, Tan?"

To which the Dutchman replied in the affirmative that all was right, and having barred the door, quietly lay down on a convenient plank to resume a previous slumber. Franck passed through a long half-lighted apartment, stumbling more than once over boxes and barrels, until he reached the foot of a ladder, and ascended.

It gave access to a wide, low loft, stowed also with bales and packages, but having the farthest end, near a small shattered window, cleared, with an attempt at arrangement. A man sitting here, at a rude table of boards littered with books and papers, was so engrossed in his writing, that he heard nothing till the burgher advanced within a few paces.

This was Franciscus Junius, pastor of the Reformed Church at Antwerp, at present in hiding from his enemies. A remarkable man, born of a noble French family at Bourges, and educated at Geneva; he so distinguished himself by his parts and learning, that at the age of twenty he was deemed worthy of this important post. It was the very place to call forth his transcendent talent and brace his earnest piety. "Greatest of all theologians since the days of the apostles," wrote the learned Scaliger. Never was hero more devoid of fear. It is on record that he preached to a secret congregation in a room off the market-place, while the windows were lit by the flames consuming certain of their brethren.

The more earnest nobles of the Compromise were not slow to perceive his value and to use him. He preached before them in Count Kulenberg's Brussels mansion, under the very eyes of the Regent, on that day in November, 1565, when her son, the Prince of Parma, was married to Mary of Portugal; and he was now the centre of a large correspondence concerning Protestant interests, whence he gathered essential facts and hints for the guidance of the leaders.

Consequently he had the honour of being well hunted by the adversary. Just a few weeks ago came a painter, professing himself a convert, who gained admission to the meetings of the Reformed, and employed himself while there in sketching a careful likeness of the preacher. It was delivered to Her Highness the Regent, along with minute statements of the residence and habits of Junius; the domestics of the house

were corrupted and threatened, and officers sent to apprehend him. But God had more work for this intrepid servant, and he escaped to Breda for that time. Since then he had been at St. Trond, with Peregrine de Lagrange for his companion. They were deputed to present to the assembled nobles a Confession of Faith, drawn up in the very words of Scripture; but the mission came to nought, "by reason of the unseasonable interposition of certain persons, whom the Lord forgive," he writes, in his autobiography.

"Coming by the stadthouse even now," said Franck, "I heard four hundred guilders offered by proclamation for discovering the author of a letter such as that," and he pointed to the half-filled sheet. "Your very writing, Master Junius."

The young man smiled. "There shall not a hair of your head perish," he murmured in French to himself; and then in the Waloon patois, "Count Egmont makes objection to my counsel, for that I am a French Calvinist. I write to say such I am, and the truer friend to religious liberty."

"But it were natural from the victor of St. Quentin," rejoined the burgher. "And indeed I fear me he is too thorough a Catholic to be relied on in our straits."

"Ah, my friend; if we wait for the Lord's work to be done by truly Reformed men, and reject all other aid, then must we needs go out of the world. And his lordship of Egmont is valuable for his opposition to the edicts. He declared to the Duchess-regent herself that he would not fight any man living in defence of the placards and Inquisition. Whoso is not against us is on our part, so far. Perchance this consistent opposition of the highest nobles in the land, these great popular demonstrations such as yesterday's (I hear there were twenty thousand gathered), may turn His Majesty from the advice of ill counsellors, and induce him at last to abolish persecution, and accept the great fact of the Reformation."

Floris Franck shook his grey head. "Sanguine, too sanguine hope! I tell you, Master Junius, Philip must first cease to be Philip. He hath a most haughty and obdurate nature, though the fashion it be to call him 'clement and debonnair.' Do I not remember him from his very boyhood? I mind me of a sight long since, of a royal progress made by his late father, the emperor; and so ill-conditioned and sullen did his present Majesty behave, that never for all the applause and glory of the multitudes would he move his bonnet, though the emperor went ofttimes bare, here, passing the streets of Antwerp. At last the emperor, as angered, hit him a great box on the ear, in presence of all. 'Take that,' he cried. 'Did your tutors teach you those manners?' But it was not the tutors' fault. And look you what the same king did help to do in England, while married to their Queen. Look what he be doing every day in Spain. The world hath heard of the cruel burnings at Valladolid and Seville."

"No popular movement backs the Reformed in Spain. Here, behold the country alive with congregations! You have heard of the stir in Holland and Zetland?" And from his mass of correspondence he drew particulars, which we shall condense. How that the Dutch pastor, Jan Arentzoon (aforetime a basket-maker), had opened the campaign by preaching in a field near Horn, in North Holland: the magistrates came to hear, and were not displeased. How the Amsterdam people longed for the same privilege; and at last, a brave man proclaimed in the merchants' street (equivalent of the modern exchange) that next day there would be sermons near Harlem, and near Alkmaar. How, when the burgomaster and council condescended to spread false reports to keep the citizens at home, a burgher, Reiner Kant, charged them with the deceit, adding, "Though you try by these contrivances to prevent the preaching, yet shall

it surely come to pass, for the Word of the Lord must have its course, nor can even the devil prevent, or in anywise obstruct it." How that when the gates of the city were shut and guarded, people leapt the walls and swam the moats; and multitudes, foreseeing that measure, had lain all night in the fields, and were rewarded when Peter Gabriel the minister appeared, and for four hours preached and prayed, "though he was a man weak and infirm," and concluded with such ardent prayer for the rulers of the land, the wolves scaring these sheep, that "scarce a dry eye was to be seen."

The fugitive printer's apprentice was not forgotten in this day's routine of business. "I want a line from your hand to some printer in these provinces," said Franck, and he told of Hans van Muler. The search after such evil-doers was so keen, that his description was probably ere now in the possession of the Antwerp authorities, and the sooner he could cross the Rhine the better.

"I have hired him as a new hand in one of my hoys bound for Rotterdam," said the burgher.

"Rotterdam," repeated Junius. "He could easily reach Leyden thence, where Arnoldzoon prints at the sign of the Golden Key." Then in a changed tone, "What is it all, but an education for the young believer; a fastening of him for ever in the truth for which he suffers?"

The minister began rapidly to write on a fresh paper, and presently finished a letter, so worded as to compromise nobody, and yet be quite clear to him for whose eye it was finally intended. Necessity had led to the contrivance of a system of conventional terms and feigned names, arranged between him and his correspondents.

"Let the youth quilt that in his doublet," was the direction. "From Ghent, is he?" and Junius, turned over his papers.

"Ay, here's the letter: 'These from an Augustin Monk, of Ghent, to the reverend pastor Franciscus Junius, of Antwerp. By safe hand.' I doubt not but 'tis a soul coming out of their toils. He writes me to resolve certain questionings, which to my poor ability I have done: yet somewhat I would ever be adding, lest it be not clear, forgetting that my God makes the daylight. Hearken to his account:—'I, being bitter against the Reformed, did, many weeks ago, search a certain tower, where I had cause to believe I would find prohibited books; and truly I came upon a volume in leathern wrapping, bearing signs of much usage; and the imprinted title was the reverend Master Martin Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. As I took it, the page fell open at a certain place, and mine eyes saw words which arrested them, even as Paul was held fast by a shining light brighter than the noon-day. I write down here those words, which verily seemed as a voice speaking unto me: "Wilt thou bring thy cowl, thy shaven crown, thy obedience, thy poverty, thy works, thy merits? What shall all these do? What shall the works of all men, and all the sufferings of the martyrs profit thee? What is the obedience of all the holy angels in comparison of the Son of God, delivered shamefully to the death of the cross, so that there was no drop of His precious blood but it was shed, and that for thy sins? If thou couldst rightly consider this incomparable price, thou wouldst hold as accursed all these ceremonies, vows, works, and merits before and after grace." Since that time I have busied myself, in secret, with this same volume while the owner was absent; and the more I read, the more I desired to read, until at length the scales seemed to fall from my eyes.'

"The letter continueth:

"'Now had my soul of a long season been in disquiet, although I was exact in my duties as ever Pharisee, and

punished the flesh sorely with fastings and scourgings, and a cilice of hair about my body. Still I was constrained to cry out, "Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!" For I loved not God a whit more, but felt in myself the spirit of an alien. My heart did back the book in its saying of what avail are all these. And methought, that truly the Son of God has died, and truly He is infinite in value. What if I be despising and flouting His most blessed sacrifice, by adding my own miserable works? Methought farther, I will to the Vulgate, and search out this matter closely, because in the universe there can be nothing to me more important. And for that I had a fierce misliking for Master Luther's writing, I would be satisfied with nought but every word of Holy Scripture itself, in the version of the blessed Saint Jerome.'

"Then he proceedeth to propound his doubts," added Junius, folding up the voluminous epistle.

"And how do you advise him?"

"To come out of Babylon, and God will show him all light and truth," said the minister. "He is partaker of antichrist if he stayeth longer."

We have omitted to say that the signature attached to the letter just laid before our readers was that of "GUY REGIS."

CHAPTER XIII.

How Hans travelled from the Nether-land to the Hollow-land.

THE chief guest-chamber in burgher Franck's mansion was grandly furnished after the fashion of the time, having a most predominant bedstead, richly carven as to posts and head-board: also tapestried with hangings of mythologic design. A truckle bed, so low that it could be rolled away under the great one, and very mean in furniture, was pitched in the corner for Hans; but the nephew of the house reversed Madam Philippa's intention by stepping into it himself.

"There—the honourable couch for thee, young heretic;" and to all remonstrance answered, "'Tis better than a hammock, man; 'tis luxury to a berth in the sides of a ship,"—and so fell asleep.

The other had no such rapid slumber. Long he remained on his knees, with face upturned in the mellow moonlight, realizing God in his homeless condition as he had never realized Him in the mother's nest. And Karl, his kind friend, who had risked so much for him, seemed to realize

nothing at all about that Supreme Providence and fatherly care,—nothing in this escape but human sharpness and prevision. During the days they had been together Hans had never seen him in prayer, never heard from his lips a recognition of God.

The next night, while he was sewing up Junius's letter in his doublet, he took courage and spoke. "What's wrong with me? Don't I hate the pope and all his ways like poison?" cried Karl, leaning on his elbow in the truckle bed. "Hadn't I a battle with Madam Philippa this very evening over her papist mass? I tell you there's no better Lutheran in all the Low Countries than I am. An' I could, I'd drive every shaven crown and cowl at sword's point over the big dyke at Cappel."

Hans did not laugh at this curious exemplification of the speaker's Christianity. "Karl, it is love, and not hate, which the Testament sets before us to be the Christian token, as thou very well knowest. I never may see thee again; and I care for thee too dear, after all thy goodness to me, that I would not brave thine anger by affirming that he has little faith in God who does not pray to Him."

The sailor turned away; he could not answer roughly the earnest remonstrance which conscience confirmed; and the simple, honest nature of the young printer had made itself respected by him even during their short intercourse. In the grey of the morning, when they parted near Scheldt side, he whispered, "The wild sea life is corrupting, comrade; but I'll try to begin to pray again."

Rapidly at first the clumsy Dutch hoy ran down the broad brown river with tide and current, past the magnificent lines of quays and jutting moles, which engrossed most of the commerce of the earth, among the thousand sail of merchantmen which lay alongside. For then was Scheldt what Thames

is now: five hundred ships made daily entry and exit, five thousand merchants regulated its trade from the famous Bourse; and Antwerp was a world's capital, like London. But with the Bible passed away the ascendency from the Flemish to the English city. Antwerp had burned William Tyndale,—England took his life-work to its heart of hearts.

Soon arose the July sun, and shot golden arrows through the marvellous fretwork of the marvellous cathedral tower, and roused the beautiful city into the life of another day. For hours was that proud spire visible, even after the little craft had got among the river-dykes, which cut off all view except of an occasional house-top, or church-steeple, or windmills set on the bank as the highest point, to catch the air.

"'Twere like you have some one dearer than common in yon city, or your gaze would not rove so far afield," said a voice at Hans's elbow. It was the steersman just relieved; and Hans did not like that the narrow spying face should have watched him.

"Surely; the fair Onse Vrouw (Notre Dame) herself," was the reply, as he pointed to Antwerp tower.

"A stranger's answer, messmate. Hast seen her so seldom, then?"

"May not a man admire an excellent and glorious work that he sees often?"

It was a shadow of suspicion, which made our fugitive more cautious in the acting of his part as a hired hand. Yet for his life he could not pay obeisance to the little painted image of the Virgin, with a dim oil-lamp guttering opposite it, in the fore part of the vessel. His only resource was to avoid the spot as much as possible.

Scheldt ere long broadened into an arm of the sea, bounded by undulating sandy dunes, nature's barriers, or by massive mounds faced with clay or stone, the contrivance of man.

The hoy did not go outside the marshy islands, to be tossed like a cork in German Ocean, but, being an unambitious bark, sailed on a tortuous course through sundry safe canals towards the Meuse. Often Hans had to get out and tug with the rest of her crew, warping her along with ropes, when the wind dropped. Then at one side he could look down upon a country of fertile fields, dotted with cottages, an expanse of the richest verdure, where sleek kine pastured, and husbandmen dug; while on the other hand he saw the sluggish water higher sometimes than their heads, bearing up barge and sail.

Hans was in Rotterdam streets next morning, feeling that he had made a second escape from the narrow spying face; but being compelled to wait while one of the frequent and ponderous drawbridges was being lowered across a canal, he was startled by a hand on his shoulder.

"No stranger," said the other; "a friend, if you make it worth while."

"I don't understand you."

The fellow whispered, and it sounded in the poor lad's ear like a serpent's hissing: "Thou art of the spawn of Luther, and Rotterdam is a most Catholic city."

"Who said such a thing?"—and the eyes of Hans quailed no more.

"Who said it? He who would not unbonnet to Our Lady's image, even before his graceless meals, nor sing the Ave-song when we pulled on the dyke-track, nor swear a round oath, nor cast dice with us, nor laugh at a jolly story,—ah! I know your canting chaps of 'the religion' well, and have seen more than one of you wearing a belt of fagots."[1]

[1] This sailor's opinion of the conduct of the Reformed was very general among their adversaries. In a letter written by the Antwerp Synod (1563) to the King of Spain, it is said—"We thank God that our enemies themselves are compelled to bear witness to our piety and patience: so that it is a common saying—'He

"God forgive thee!" prayed Hans. "And now you want a price for not sending me to the same fiery fate?"

"Exactly so. A simple matter of trade between us two."

Creaking slowly and heavily, the cumbrous timbers of the drawbridge descended. Hans' eye was watched by his persecutor. "No, my friend, never will you cross that bridge till you buy what I have to sell. Come, and keep the toll;" and the fellow laughed gratingly. "Five broad pieces for crossing!"

"And I have but two on earth. I'll back to the boat, and tell of thy robber conduct."

"'Twill be none the better for thee, poor youth," said the other, ironically, keeping close alongside him. "Skipper has nought more to do with Van Myk the rover, who only shipped for a passage, like thyself. Come, thou'rt lucky to be able to buy me off. Wouldn't sell my conscience, only I'm empty of coins at present. Hand over the two broad pieces, and we are quits."

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swears not, he must be a Protestant; he is neither an ill-liver nor a drunkard: he is of the new sect.' Yet, notwithstanding so honourable a testimony, no kind of torments are forgotten in the punishing of us."

And in Brandt's Martyrology there occurs an affecting instance in point: "John Herewin of Houtkerk in West Flanders, who had almost till that time led an irregular life, having got some knowledge of the doctrines of the Reformation at London, was apprehended and imprisoned at Hondschoten. As they were leading him to execution, he said—'Thus are the servants of Jesus Christ rewarded by a miserable world. Formerly, when I drank and gamed night and day, and spent my life in all sorts of sin, then was I in no danger of these bands,' lifting up his fettered hands as high as he could. 'The moment I entered on a sober and godly life, the world became mine enemy; it persecutes me, it hurries me to execution. But the servant is not greater than his Lord!' As he went along, he sang the 100th Psalm: some of the standers-by sang with him—some softly, others aloud, and above four hundred persons comforted and encouraged him! one leading him by the hand to the stake where he was to be strangled and burnt, strengthening him with godly discourse till he expired. This happened 4th November 1560."

It came to that at last, and Hans plunged away among the streets, to get as far as he could from his tormentor. Burgher Franck had given him the money; and now, except a few copper coins, he was penniless. Certainly he could not hire passage in a boat to Delft and Leyden, which was the plan indicated for him; he must walk thither; and, in his new distrust of all men, he was very chary of asking his way. Sore and sick at heart he felt, until he saw a little child come crying along the street, having hurt itself: but presently a working-man in leathern jerkin walking up behind, returning to his breakfast, called, reached out his hand, to which the child sprang, and there were no more tears. It told its troubles, already half forgotten in the father's smile, and was completely pacified in his strength and love.

"And I, O Father in heaven, have forgotten to look to Thee, and take hold of Thy strength!"

Not his own blundering had made him destitute now, but the feeling that he could not give the honour of his God to a graven image; and the sweetness of losing something for Christ's sake entered his soul.

He found himself near the Groot Markt, a wide bridge over a canal, where now stands the bronze statue of Erasmus; and among the numerous craft at rest or gliding about was one barge with "Leiden" in white letters on its round stern. He followed it into other canals, and thence past the boom and the watergate. His heart leaped to see again a wide flat horizon, free as air.

Delft was only eight miles distant. Through the seventeen Netherland provinces cities lay as close as did villages in other countries. It was the crowding of commercial prosperity.

That afternoon, among the many market-wagons issuing from Delft gates, was one containing a solitary driver, which took the line of the straight dyke to Leyden. Tradition said

this canal was originally a Roman ditch dug between the Rhine and Meuse, to help in bridling the irrepressible Belgicae. No finer water-way drained the Hollow-Land; but atop the bank was very narrow for the passage of two vehicles or the turning of one, consequently the wagon aforesaid (and every other) was furnished with a curiously short pole between its horses, which the driver guided with his foot as carefully as did his hand the bridle. Seeing Hans a long way ahead, and having always a kind heart for a wayfarer, he stopped when the wagon neared him. "Wouldst have a seat for a mile or two?"

Hans thankfully accepted the offer. This was no narrow spying face, but the bright straightforward eye of a true man. Where had he seen it before? The dark pointed beard, the regular intelligent features, seemed almost familiar. But when the driver got out to settle some tackling on the off horse, and the halting on one foot became apparent, a whole scene flashed before the eyes of the young printer. Under a pollard willow-tree was a splendid personage in a velvet coat, with a brilliant ensign of the Fleece sparkling on his breast; a little lame man in front, carrying books, and talking earnestly. Hans, in his admiration for the former, had watched the pair closely that day in the Ghent field-meeting.

Just the same voice spoke now, as he resumed his seat, "A fine hay-harvest has been sent us this season from the good Lord. I never saw the polders richer or heavier."

"Better than the water-meadows outside Ghent?"

His tone caused Kasper Arnoldzoon to turn and gaze steadily at him. "The best harvest I ever saw outside Ghent," he replied, slowly, "was when I went there with a monk Herman."

They grasped hands. "Brothers we are," said Arnoldzoon, responsive to the flash of gladness in the youth's face.

"Ah! and I thought I had left all the Reformed behind me, and was in nought but enemy's land till I could reach Leyden," said the young printer.

"And to whom in Leyden, my youth?"

"Is there a sign called the Golden Key?" asked Hans, with a remnant of needless caution.

"Thou'rt of smith's craft, then?"

"No; a printer I would be, when I served a space longer."

"Ah! 'Twere some knowing person guided thee. The locksmith and the printer is my brother Giles Arnoldzoon. Now tell me thy history." And having heard it, the wagoner raised his felt hat, and thanked God; as indeed he did for most things; his soul was a chamber of perpetual praise.

"But I remember not seeing thee at that great preaching."

He was coming from others now, held beyond the Hague, and even in the town itself. "I brought my wares thither," and he pointed with the whip to some casks behind him. "They went out full of good seed, but come home empty; and I look for a certainty of fruit, because God's Word liveth and endureth for ever."

And again: "Our Holland will come out stanch for the gospel yet. Strange—where priests have committed so many cruel murders, that men thought the truth was verily stifled and crushed beyond recovery—the sufferings of the martyrs have not one whit terrified our people. And thou art son of a martyr also, my youth," he added, for Hans had told him of his parentage.

Warm-hearted Arnoldzoon grasped again his hand. "Canst tread in no worthier steps than his who loved his Saviour better than his life," he said; "and I believe in the brothers and sisters and mothers granted even in this world, as well as the persecutions; be sure thou wilt want no friendship thy God seeth good."

ON THE WAY TO LEYDEN.

Behind willow-tufted banks the sun went down, and yet Leyden spires were in the distance. "The gates will be shut ere we could reach them," said Arnoldzoon; "but I counted on resting the night at a friend's, by here. Thou wilt be made welcome too, being, above all, of such faithful ancestry;" and they turned towards a windmill wielding its great arms slowly. Not grinding corn, or crushing oil, was its special office, but pumping water to drain the soil.

"Mayhap, being only native of the Nether-land, you have never seen a polder farm in the Hollow-Land?"

And he told the new-comer how all this province of Holland was in a manner scooped from the sea; won from sand and salt marsh by hard labour of the hardiest men, who had erected an enormous dyke outside, against which "broad ocean leaned" itself, and wrought no harm by the mighty pressure. Also of the belt of dunes on other parts of the coast, where the Almighty Framer of land and sea had made of sand-hills and bulrushes a self-repairing barrier, as powerful as the human contrivance of stones and clay.

Portions of the land inside the dykes, being lower than the intersecting canals, could not drain into them, and so remained ponds or quagmires, until the water was pumped away. After this process the soil gradually developed into a richness surpassing all the rest. The deepest pastures, the most blooming orchards, the yellowest harvests, were on those "polder" farms, sunk far beneath the level of the sea.

Darkening twilight, and rising mists from the watercourses, made our travellers steer cautiously along the narrow track to the house. Dogs barked violently, red lights appeared through a knot of trees; and presently they saw the open door, and a man with lantern standing at it. Evidently Arnoldzoon was expected. "One of us," was the brief introduction of Hans; it was enough.

What a bright clean kitchen! Every thing was polished and shining with innumerable eyes, that could be polished and could shine. The brick floor, ruddy in itself, was ruddier from the blaze of a mass of hard peats heaped behind irons on the hearth. A young girl was sitting at her wheel in a corner in full light; an old woman was knitting, the housewife bustling about supper. A bundle of osiers and a half-finished basket lay on the ground where the farmer's son had been at work, before he went outside to help at housing the horses. Snowy linen was laid already on the table, and spotless trenchers; an immense yellow cheese reared itself like a fortress, flanked by towers of brown loaf and huge sausages, others of which simmered with savoury hiss beside the fire.

Altogether a look of comfort and plenty subsisted in the household, suiting well what an Italian visitor remarks:— "The people rejoiced in such abundance of all things, that there was no man, however humble, who did not seem rich for his station."

"And how did our brethren prosper at the Hague?" the farmer asked.

"I'll tell thee. Twenty wagons full of Delft citizens came over on the appointed day, to hear Master Peter Gabriel preach. And where did they alight, and choose the spot of their meeting, but just before the house of the president of the council, because that some time agone he threatened the utmost severity of the Placards on any of 'the religion' that ventured themselves near him! True enough now he saw that they were not daunted; for the wagons were formed into a ring, and the preacher in their midst; and the president heard hymns and Reformed discourse for the first time in his life, belike."

"Surely they were armed who did this?" asked the young farmer, with a sparkle in his eyes.

"Ay, every one; it had too much the air of vain boasting for me. Spiritual worship thrives poorly under carnal excitement."

"Yet it was a protest against tyranny," said Farmer Walther. "And will Master Gabriel preach again to us Leydeners?"

"Certain traders of Utrecht have taken him to their city, at the present. They have had Jan Arentzoon of late, preaching near the castle; whence a musket was fired, which wounded one young woman of the congregation; but it did not disperse them, nor deter a good lady in the town from inviting the minister to her house."

Says the old chronicler:—"But her harbouring him cost her afterwards both estate and life!" She was the Vrouw van Diemen, beheaded by Alva.

"Your wares went fast enough, I warrant?"

"Not a leaf left in the casks. That Spanish device is excellent; no guard at the gates inquired respecting what they thought was my Flemish ale. Thus they get prohibited books into Spain, friend Hans."

The wagon, heaped with farm and garden produce for Leyden market, with lettuces, beans, onions, cabbages, endive, beetroot, early pears, and driven now by young Walther, passed the gates next morning early. All quays, all canals, seemed this symmetrical city of the "Water-Land:" its handsome houses and bridges of cut stone (expensive material, since entire Holland scarce can furnish a pebble) rose, amid avenues of willows, poplars, linden trees. "And that is Rhine!" exclaimed Hans, who had expected a nobler tide than the deep slow stream, bound within artificial banks and quays.

"You have been looking at Rhine-water for many a mile, split into five hundred channels," was Arnoldzoon's reply.

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"The Golden Key" was one of a succession of signs, in a busy street along a canal side; for most shops had a trading emblem, relic of the preceding age which could not read, and required to be informed through pictures. Here Giles Arnoldzoon carried on the handicraft of a locksmith and worker in iron. A dried-looking bald man, much older than his brother, and living alone, except at such intervals as Kasper was at home.

"My brother, welcome," was his staid and solemn greeting, as he looked up from the lock he was filing and cleaning carefully, examining it through spectacles.

"I have brought you a helper," quoth Kasper.

"A helper?" and he glanced up again sharply "I want none."

"But he is recommended to you by the pastor of Antwerp —Franciscus Junius."

"That is another matter. Let him sit down. 'What thy hand findeth to do, do it with might;' and I must end with this lock ere other business."

Kasper Arnoldzoon went away about his own affairs; and Hans was left sitting for a long time in the back part of the dingy shop, where was a small brick forge and a fire. The severe, furrowed face bending over the lock seemed to have quite forgotten him. And where was the printing office? He heard no trundling or clicking of a press at work; nothing but the tiny sounds of the workman's file occasionally. One or two customers came and went with brief words. An hour before noon, the master of the shop having looked at a dial in his window, shut and barred the door.

"Bring out what food is in that cupboard," and he pointed to a corner. They ate and drank, and Hans having previously ripped the lining of his doublet, gave him the letter from Antwerp.

"And you have run some risk already for the truth's sake?" —this to Hans. "Is it in thy heart, young man?"

Hans felt chilled, more by the manner than the matter of the question. "I hope so, good sir."

"Call me not 'sir.' Respect among men is a snare. There are no ranks, or should be none, among us of 'the religion.' I am simply Giles Arnoldzoon, the locksmith. You can handle a composing-stick?—then follow me."

The press was in a cellar under the house, whither it must have been carried piecemeal. A rude machine, compared with those in the Ghent printing office: and the fount of type so short that only a few pages could be set up at a time.

"Our work is grievously curtailed now," said the locksmith, with a sort of resentful sigh. "We can only print tracts, handbills, and the like: javelins and arrows for the war, when we would fain forge the caliver and arquebus. Here is the paper from Master Calvin's writing, which I began to set up last night."

Night and day were much alike in this cavern. Hans went to work by a rushlight. It was very dreary and lonely. The traffic overhead was deadened to a rumbling, and he fancied he could hear in any pauses the lapping of water a few feet away.

Among the sentences selected from Calvin's work, "to encourage our brethren against the bloody hand of the persecutor," was the following:

"Better be deprived of everything, and possess Christ. If the ship is in danger, the sailors throw everything overboard, that they may reach the port in safety. Do likewise. Riches, honours, rank, outward respect, all should be sacrificed to possess Christ. He is our only blessedness!"

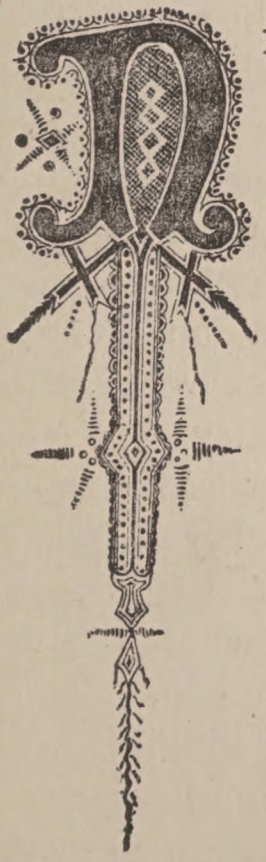
That set Hans thinking. What did he know of such blessedness? He investigated his own soul.

"At work already?" said the cheerful voice of Kasper Arnoldzoon. The compositor felt as if daylight and fresh air had entered with him. "No pleasant workshop, my youth: but necessity is stern. Giles, my brother, owned a printer's office at Rotterdam, but his main work was discovered by a spy, and our books made into a blazing pile in the Groot Markt: wherein probably ourselves likewise would have been burnt, but for friends conveying us away."

While the two worked off some copies of the pages in type, Arnoldzoon went on to say how that certain journeymen printers in the town, attached to the Reformation cause, helped his brother in this secret work. "So he will find it nowise difficult to procure employment for a friend. There is no nobler spirit than my brother Giles," added Kasper, as if knowing how unfavourably the stern manner and mien of the locksmith had impressed the young stranger. "Always ready to shed his blood for the religion; which, indeed, he doubts not will be his end."

CHAPTER XIV.

How the Procession of the Virgin took place in Antwerp.



INA FRANCK lay on her couch as usual, one August afternoon, surrounded by every appliance of comfort, and even luxury, that her father's love could bestow. Yet a shadow was upon the usually clear brow, and the sensitive lips were half parted with an expression of pain. From her listless fingers hung a costly plaything, a nutmeg set with silver, and pointed with a pearl: it was attached to her girdle, where ladies often wore a pomander or scent ball. Near her a small table was spread with writing materials, considerably more cumbrous than the delicate apparatus of a modern boudoir: presently she drew them towards her, and opened a manuscript volume about half filled already: a sort of intermittent journal.

"Little book of mine, why do I tell you what troubles me when you say nothing in return? Shall I give you words, dumb little book? Sister Margaret says I ought to transcribe some worthy author, instead of wasting time over my own silly thinkings. Yes, I will write at the head

of every leaf a fair verse of Holy Scripture, according as I remember. To-day I think of—'Fear not, little flock; for it is the pleasure of your Father to give you the kingdom.' My heart is warmed when I call the great God my Father. When I look at my other one, and see his kind eyes upon me, and know he is ready to give me all things that I want, and that I need not be afraid while his strong arm takes care of me, I see, in a dim way, that it is all a parable of God. But I can trust in God so much better for myself than for him.

"Aunt Philippa foretels such dreadful things. Yesterday was the great procession of the Ommegang, celebrating the Assumption of Our Lady; though I can find in no part of the Testament an account of her being taken to heaven without dying. Aunt Philippa and Sister Margaret had quite a battle about the procession. Aunt Philippa insisted that the front of our house should be decorated as usual, hung with showy carpets and tapestries, to do honour to the day. But just when we could hear the trumpets and drums coming towards our street, Margaret walked quickly into our saloon, and shut close the shutters. 'You can come into a back room, Nina, where we need neither see nor hear the idolatry,' she said. But Aunt Philippa stood up, and opened the window nearest me. 'Nina will remain where she is,' were her words, in a suppressed tone, but her face was pale with anger. Margaret stood guard to prevent the other window being opened; and never did I think the procession so long in passing. 'Come hither, my child,' said Aunt Philippa, with a gentleness that made her so like my own mother, that I could do nothing else but lean on her arm and my crutch to the window, and look out, though my eyes were blinded with tears. Notwithstanding all the popular oppositions to which we have been hearing, the procession seemed as grand as ever. The twenty-six guilds of trade were there, marching

THE PROCESSION OF THE VIRGIN.

in their splendid dresses, carrying standards; and all the rhetoric societies (which my father says have so much helped our Reformed cause by their debatings and freedom of speech), and all the religious orders, of course; and the trained bands of the city, and the burgher militia, and magistrates, in furred robes and chains of office. And loud music was playing from divers instruments. But not so loud as quite to drown the voices of the crowd: and some we heard plain enough, reviling the image, and calling her an idol. Oh, strange! reviling Our Lady of Antwerp! Pale as Aunt Philippa was before, she became death-like, and even pushed me aside, as she opened the casement to hear.

"'Mayken, Mayken! Little Mary! We are tired of thee! Antwerp will have none of thee—'tis thy last procession. Mayken, thy hour is coming!'

"'I marvel that the troops turn not on that rabble rout with their swords,' said Aunt Philippa.

"'Perhaps the troops happen unfortunately to think with them,' observed Margaret, with a triumphant smile. And then very bitter words passed, words which I shall try to forget, because each was out of temper, and only thought of wounding the other: and Margaret, who professes to love and serve our gentle Saviour, showed nothing of His spirit. And they left me—oh, with such an aching in my head!

"Some time after, my dear father came in from the Exchange, where daily he transacts his business. Not that I think he is at all so ardent or so absorbed about it, as before he came to know 'the new religion.' He looked weary and worn, and rested his head upon his hand in a tired fashion not usual with him who is so energetic. I would have asked did any of his ships miscarry, or what bad news was abroad; but he was not above two or three minutes beside me when Aunt Philippa entered, the anger not all extinct in her face.

"'I foresee,' she said, 'that the extravagant fanaticism of your eldest daughter will yet bring you to the stake, Floris. Here am I, trying to keep up the appearance of orthodoxy in your household—,' and she went on to tell him what had happened.

"'Margaret was very wrong to oppose you in that violent way,' he said; 'but as to her calling the image an idol—' he smiled a little with his own kind smile, and shook his head.

"'The world is come to a pretty pass, when forward and ignorant girls dare set themselves up to be judges of the worship which has suited older and wiser people all their lives,' said Aunt Philippa.

"'Only because they have never looked into the grounds of it, nor ever considered whether they ought——'

"Don't argue, brother. The spirit of insubordination and disrespect your daughter Margaret shows, would be enough to condemn her opinions in my eyes.'

"'It is not the spirit of the gospel,' he said. 'But the child means well, except that her zeal is too headstrong. And I fear the image will have some trouble to protect herself, if the people carry out their threatenings.'

"'Nonsense! Our Lady of Antwerp! impossible that harm should befal her. No, no, brother, it behoves us to look nearer home; I tremble for the precipice on which you stand.'

"'I had rather not discuss that now,' said he; and I feel sure one reason was the presence of me, his little Nina, as he calls me, though I may, indeed, be counted grown up in years, being to the full seventeen. He is so fearful lest I should be frightened, this good father!

"'Well, I know,' he said, 'to whose care I have given myself; and He is able to keep me and mine. But I assure you,' he added, in another tone, 'the canons of the cathedral

do not despise the danger as you do: they have not ventured to expose the image in her usual place near the great altar, but have locked her into a side-chapel, where she has an iron screen for protection.'

"'I would have left her in the customary place,' said Aunt Philippa, loftily. 'It was great want of faith. Now, if ever, we might look for a miracle.'

"Nevertheless, the news appeared to perturb her, for she was struck quite silent, and left the room shortly afterwards. 'Poor Philippa! the Church has no more devoted ally in Antwerp,' said my father. 'When she is converted by the grace of God, she will make a grand Christian.'

"'You speak confidently of her conversion, dear father.'

"'As one ought who has prayed earnestly for a soul, and believes that God is true,' was his reply. 'But it is by deeds, not words, your Aunt Philippa will be influenced. I wish Margaret had less fire in her zeal: I must speak to the child.'

"I asked him if he had seen the procession? Yes, and a handful of mud thrown by some person opposite the Exchange, had stuck to the jewelled petticoats of the image, provoking shouts of derision.

"And the English merchants, how they smile! 'We have done with all that mummery in our country,' say they. 'Our Lady of Walsingham was nigh as great as yours of Antwerp, but we dethroned her: and have thriven better ever since.'

"'My little Nina! these earthly confusions and mistakes drive one towards the pure air of heaven! Let us think of our inheritance, our country bought for us by the blood of Christ—the city where shall enter nothing that defileth or maketh a lie—oh, Nina, it is no dream, no fable—it is all real, and never will fade away.'

"Only lately does my dear father speak such words. Formerly his whole soul seemed to be centred in gathering

riches for us his children, and making a place for himself as a foremost citizen. Now since Master Junius preached that great sermon, his thoughts and desires seem to have got quite another turn; as if he had discovered a new and a grander country, with greater wealth in it, as did the mariner Columbus, and was going there after a short space. Is not this indeed the truth?

"And when he saw Margaret, what was his reproof to her? 'Child, you have behaved yourself unseemly towards the sister of your mother. I would have you remember what is written, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without," and again: "Do all things without disputings."'

"He has become very gentle of late.

"After to-day's meal at noon, Aunt Philippa rose up, and expressed her resolution of visiting the cathedral, in spite of the reports of disturbance which continued to reach us through the servants. 'I have for twenty-five years presented myself on this day at Our Lady's shrine, and shall I shrink back because of a little danger—if such exist, which I cannot credit?'

"My father said—'I think it no place for a tender lady.'

"'All who venerate the Catholic faith, and the institutions of our city, and our holy worship, ought to be there,' was her reply. 'Very brief space would the rioters linger before such a demonstration. Ursel shall come with me, and one of the serving-men;' and she walked towards the door.

"'Nay, since thou art so determined, I will be of thy escort likewise, Sister Philippa;' in answer to which she gave but a grave, deep curtsey, in her stately way; she must have been very graceful when young.

"So, they have gone to the cathedral; and I lie here in fear. Why should I fear? If I had true trust in our God, I would pray to Him with such reliance that I would be as the angels in heaven, joyful always."

CHAPTER XV.

Concerning the War against Graven Images.

THE ragged crowd gathered in front of that beautiful cathedral, looked so puny in comparison with the vast, calm bulk of building, rising towards the very clouds, that Madam Philippa was greatly reassured at first sight. "What is the thing you said, Ursel—that Notre Dame d'Anvers need fear insult?" said the lady, ceasing her stately walk, to turn sharp on her attendant. "It is a mistake. It could never be."

Ursel, not pleased, murmured something about seeing for oneself: as for her, she had been to the market in the morning, and had heard what she had heard.

They had not passed much within the chief entrance ere they found that insult had already begun. The sabbath stillness of those grand five-fold aisles was broken by the rude voices and roystering of some scores of idlers who wandered about, ridiculing the images, trampling the tombs, but as yet attempting no damage. Once or twice the cry was raised:

"Vivent les Gueux!" Hoarse and strange it sounded,

where no voices but those of choristers were wont to stir the banners.

"My friend," remonstrated burgher Franck, with a man who yelled it in their very ears—"that is no cry for this place. They profess here to worship God." He could not shake off the old sacredness.

"What!" exclaimed the man, rudely—"thou popish persecutor—ah, I know thee," as he looked close in the burgher's countenance by the dim light. "One of 'the religion,' as reported — Master Franck, the merchant," he added, in a more respectful manner, to those nearest. "Sir, we will brook no interference with our rights in our own cathedral: and I say, that if justice were done, not a stone would be left on another in this idolatrous building!"

"And I say," rejoined Franck, firmly, "that the burgrave and magistrates of Antwerp will never permit the choicest monument of their city to be injured: it is at your peril that you use such language."

The fellow was cowed, and slunk off, muttering. Madam Philippa turned a kindlier look on her Protestant brother-in-law than she had done for many a day.

"I will but say a prayer before the shrine, and then depart."

Her undaunted spirit was shown by kneeling down in the very face of the rabble, to perform her devotions opposite the iron railing in the choir. She would pay honour, though all the world contemned. Ursel followed her example. Certainly it was not easy to give composed attention to what they were about, especially as various satirical remarks were made on "the old lady and her duenna," and rude jests circulated, with the noisy laughter, so empty, and so easy to raise. But Ursel scorned to take notice of these; until one urchin, grinning through the iron bars, demanded if "little Mary was afraid, that she had gone so early to her nest?"

Ursel scrambled to her feet with wrathful agility, seized him by his hair, and boxed his ears soundly. "I'll teach thee to make a mock of our blessed Lady!"

Of course he roared twice as loud as he need have done, attracting allies from all quarters; and such a commotion ensued, that the burgher was glad to draw away his females by a postern door, into the neighbouring cloister. And the last glimpse Madam Philippa had of the great aisle, she beheld one of the mob in the pulpit, mouthing and ranting, and thumping a book, in imitation of a friar's sermon, to a gaping and grinning audience below.

"I'll to the Stadt House, and represent the state of things, as soon as you are safe at home, Philippa. The magistrates cannot know fully what is going on. They should send a guard of the militia."

"But where are the cathedral officers, or even the clergy? They alone could drive off that contemptible *canaille* with ignominy!" said Madam Philippa, every nerve strung to resistance. She would almost have liked to bear part in the impending strife; certainly she would have wished to witness it: for great was her triumph when Franck, returning home some hours later, told how the rabble had been expelled by the doorkeepers and a few respectable citizens, after a scuffle among themselves for possession of the pulpit.

"Now, if they keep the great church shut for a few days, the storm from the south may blow over."

"What storm?" asked Madam Philippa.

"Why, the populace have been doing it elsewhere," said Franck; "breaking down the images and ornaments of the churches; at St. Omer, Ypres, Menin, and along the line of the Lys. It is reported even from Valenciennes and Tournay."[1]

[1] A premature rumour: Tournay Cathedral was not cleared by the iconoclasts till 22nd August.

"And the Catholics of Hainault, of Flanders, permitted this?" she exclaimed, her eyes flashing.

"I hope it will be a warning to the magistrates here, if they wish to save our city churches from sack; such examples are infectious among ignorant people."

"Father, you speak almost as if you sympathized with the idolaters! Now I think it were all well done!" exclaimed Margaret, in that contentious voice which always made little Nina's heart beat double.

"Peace, my daughter. The cause of Christ can never be served by lawless violence. While protesting with all my heart against the worship of graven images, for our God is a jealous God——"

"Nay, brother," put in Madam Philippa, whose only notice of Margaret's speech had been a supercilious glance—"but you surely ought to know that we do not accord the same adoration——"

"I am a plain man," he said; "I am not conscious of being able in my spirit to separate between sorts of worship. The Word of God is enough for me—'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, and thou shalt not bow down to them.'"

So the matter ended for that day. But burgher Franck's exertions to save the great cathedral were remembered in his favour at an after day.

On the day following, the magistrates of Antwerp displayed all the irresolution of divided counsels. No guard was set on the cathedral, and in consequence it was early next morning again filled with a tumultuous crowd. The superb organ, the finest in the Netherlands, pealed forth its last music to the tremulous Latin lispings of priests in the matins service. Far other sounds rang through the aisles all day; shouts and party cries, and occasionally a psalm of Clement Marôt

roared from a thousand throats. A deputation from the magistrates besought the rioters to withdraw; the more peaceably disposed went, the violent remained. These burst forth, as by a preconcerted signal, into that rude version of the second commandment:—

"Tailler ne te feras imaige
De quelque chose que ce soit,
Sy honneur luy fais, ou hommaige
Bon Dieu jalousie en reçoit."

Scarce had the strain ceased, ere the iron screen of the choir was broken through, the magnificent idol dashed to the pavement, and her jewelled attire torn in fragments. The magistrates fled. Like magic appeared all manner of implements of destruction—axes, crowbars, hammers. "Every statue was hurled from its niche, every picture torn from the wall, every painted window shivered to atoms, every ancient monument shattered, every sculptured decoration, however inaccessible in appearance, dashed to the ground." Before midnight the adornments which four centuries had matured were destroyed: Antwerp Cathedral was but an empty shell.

The act was lawless: but we see in it a species of wild justice. The rulers of soul and body in the Netherlands had shown no consideration for God's own image in the human form, but had treated it with every imaginable cruelty; and as the eloquent historian says:—"Those statues, associated as they were with the remorseless persecution which had so long desolated the provinces, had ceased to be images. They had grown human and hateful, so that the people arose and devoted them to indiscriminate massacre." A massacre, be it always remembered, solely of unconscious wood and stone.

What a night was that in Antwerp! Catholic and Protestant alike cowered and kept within doors; all believed that the

richest city of the Netherlands was at the mercy of an infuriated mob; and each prepared for self-defence. The Reformed felt no safer than their Catholic neighbours. Houses were universally barricaded, and weapons got ready for use.

At burgher Franck's the long table in the dining-hall was laid out with them, and the servants assembled who could handle them in case of attack. One or two arquebuses and matchlocks, a couple of rapiers and halberts and broadswords, a pistol for the master himself (having the cumbrous wheel-lock, which seemed devised to give an enemy warning), made up the armoury. The beaufets, lately so gay with silver plate and curious vessels, were empty and bare; Madam Philippa had their contents conveyed to the cellars. She herself was the animating spirit of the little garrison. Sometimes, glowing with indignation at distant outcries and sounds of ravage, she would descend from the saloon where the women were gathered, and where her brother's presence perhaps checked her zeal, and harangue the men on the sin of schism, and the fearful consequences of listening to the Reformed preachers. Nor was she wanting in predictions of terrible things to come, when his Catholic Majesty, her great hero, should take vengeance.

Meanwhile, dear little Nina lay on her couch, with eyes closed for the most part, and her hand clasped often by her father; but there was no great anxiety in her heart. Her prayer had procured for her the trustfulness of a child in Him who disposeth events. One verse from the prohibited Bible seemed to overrule all her mind—"The Lord reigneth."

Near midnight a slight knocking was heard at the outer door. After due precaution it was opened, and a person muffled in a cloak presented himself.

"Father Adrian!" exclaimed the burgher.

"Ay, my son; thou'lt give shelter to an old friend from this tempest?"

He had been confessor to Franck's deceased wife; an aged man, and feeble, yet he bore some weighty burden in his arms.

"The robbers have broken into our monastery, and are destroying all before them; and truly I cared not so much for myself, seeing a man can die but once, and martyrdom is glorious."

It was natural the old priest should express these apprehensions; yet, as it turned out, during that week of lawless image-breaking in the Low Countries, not a single life was sacrificed, not a drop of blood was spilt.

Father Adrian's great fear had been for the inestimable treasure he carried in a golden and jewelled case. It was not to be lightly exposed to view, but they had all seen it at the great festivals—a withered bone of a dead saint. "From under the very eyes of the spoilers I rescued it," said he, exultingly.

"Perhaps you would wish it stored with our silver cups and flagons, hidden away in the cellars?" asked Madam Philippa, who verily felt a little ashamed of the relic, in presence of the shrewd and intelligent Reformed family.

"I let it not out of my sight," was the reply. "I must be its custodian till happier times and worthier keeping. But ah! woe's me for what mine eyes have witnessed this night—we could see much through the grille near the high altar; the commonest rabble drest in our beautiful and holy vestments; copes and chasubles of priceless value round the necks of unhallowed youths and women; all the sacred images hacked in pieces—methinks the very end of the world is come!"

"Then shall there be a new heaven and a new earth," whispered Nina to her father.

Midnight had passed, when a distant cry—"Long live the Beggars!" broke upon their ears. It seemed to augment and roll nearer. "The rioters are coming this way," said Madam

Philippa. The old priest crossed himself, and caught up his precious reliquary. A glare from numerous torches and cressets filled the street. Opposite burgher Franck's door they seemed to stop, and every ear was bent to listen to the surging murmur of voices. Crashing blows followed, and shouts; it was merely clearing away the image of St. Hippolytus and its carved canopy from the corner of the street. After which the mob poured upon the nearest church, and broke open the doors.

"I don't think they can have any object but to sack the churches," said burgher Franck, with an air of relief. "They appear to respect private property."

"As if they could do worse than sacrilege!" said Madam Philippa, warmly. She and the old priest settled the matter very conclusively in their own opinion, until burgher Franck stopped his walk to and fro in the chamber.

"Father Adrian, you, as well as I, have seen the nerves and muscles of a living man quivering and shrinking in the fire; think you that were no greater outrage and sacrilege on the handiwork of God Almighty, than the cutting to pieces of a wooden or stony image, which can neither feel nor know, but is the imperfect handiwork of men?"

"Oh, as for me," hesitated Father Adrian—"don't appeal to me—I am never for severe measures;" and the poor old man caressed his reliquary with his smooth white palms, and met nobody's eyes. "I dare not disapprove of what the Church has considered necessary to her discipline in all ages, —the lopping away of unworthy members,—but I wish it could have been gentler done."

"If Church and King be not wise in time, our country will be ruined," said burgher Franck; "and they will have a waste land and depopulated cities to rule over. To my own knowledge, as a merchant of Antwerp, many score shiploads of

our tradespeople and craftsmen have sailed down Scheldt, seeking rest in England, since the renewed proclamation of the Trent canons and the Inquisition last year; and these not our worst men, mark you, Father Adrian, but able artizans and good livers, after the manner of the Reformed; and I am much mistaken if they prove not health and wealth to any country that entertains them."

The burgher dropt his chin on his chest, and sat musing; it was no new thought to him to take refuge in England: but what did it involve?

The dawn of the summer morning came at last: and, like a nightmare, the great city shook off her terrors on seeing the sunshine. The citizens came gradually to realize that themselves and their possessions were safe. Even the Church's property was safe, in one sense; not an ounce of gold or silver had been carried away, nor a jewel appropriated from the seventy despoiled altars. The officials of the cathedral ventured forth to gather up the fragments, and were very agreeably surprised to find a vast quantity of their substantial wealth intact; but relic and statue and picture had been ravaged; the banners and escutcheons of the Golden Fleece alone remained.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Lost One Restored.

WE break away for a time from the city of Antwerp, and the divided household of burgher Franck, and retrace our steps, in imagination, to the busy town of Ghent, and the humble living apartment of the Beguine nun, Margaret.

She is not alone. Once more seated by her small table is the Augustin monk, while she is eagerly listening to a recital from his lips. Both have been much moved during the interview, which has already been prolonged a full hour, and which yet shows no signs of discontinuance. On the table, near the monk's hand, is a well-worn printed book, in leather wrappings. He may have been reading from it, but it is closed now. The widow nun's face is flushed with eager excitement, very unusual in one of her naturally calm temperament; while the softened expression of the monk's prematurely aged countenance is strangely at variance with its habitual harshness. Strange to say, moreover, tears seem ready to start from his eyes, trained as he has been to self-command.

"But Guy, Guy, I do not understand," cried the Beguine, with bewildered air, and breaking a short silence. "At your demand I gave you up to the service of the Church. You told me at the first that it must be so; that you could not serve two masters; that natural ties must be as though they never had been; that thenceforward I would have no son, —you, no mother."

"It is true, only too true," said the monk, softly.

"It was near upon breaking my heart, Guy; but I submitted. I believed that, as a dutiful son of the Church, you were to have no other home than in her bosom, no thoughts, feelings, desires or passions apart from the sacred office on which you earnestly desired to enter. Was it not so?"

"So I was instructed, and so I then believed," again softly replied the monk. "Yes," he added, more firmly; "so I then believed. It was the common jargon; it has again and again been repeated as an article of faith and practice in the Romish Church, that when the novice enters the cloister, he leaves behind him all the earthly weaknesses and engrossing cares of the outer world; that when he has put upon him the sacerdotal robe, and has undergone the sacred tonsure, and taken the holy vows, he puts on also a new nature."

"And is it not so?" asked Margaret.

"Is it so?" said the monk, sadly. "Mother, mother, dear mother: I bless God I can again call you by that name! Mother, has it been so with you? If, as a monk, I have forgotten that I had ever an earthly mother, have you, as a nun, ever cast off the remembrance of the son who thus cruelly deserted you?"

"I am a woman," replied the Beguine, somewhat bitterly, as it seemed to the awakened and enlightened conscience of her visitor; for as he covered his face with the upraised hands which, till then, had rested on the table, he uttered a deep groan; but otherwise was silent. In a moment, however, he

had regained his former partial composure, and again looked fixedly, but with the same softened expression as before.

"I am a woman," the Beguine repeated, "and to me was it permitted to cherish, in secret, memories too sacred to be outwardly displayed and boasted. It seemed to me then, at the very first, or my heart would surely have been broken, it seemed to me that conveyed to my soul was the assurance of Divine help. 'I can do all things,—can bear all things,—through Christ who strengtheneth me,' came into my mind. I dwelt upon that thought then, nor has it ever left me, when otherwise the burden would have been too heavy for woman to bear;—'I can do all things, through Christ who strengtheneth me.'"

"Mother, I believe all that you say!" exclaimed the monk; and the tears, which till then had been restrained, trickled down his cheeks unheeded.

"Am I, then," continued the nun, "to unlearn all I have learned; and to school my heart afresh? Is it some new device of the Inquisition, whose servant you have been, though, as you tell me, in a holy cause, to test to the utmost the strength of resistance?"

"Mother! dear mother!" and the monk's heaving breast gave proof of the sincerity of his utterances: "I know all you would say, for I have taught you all. But say that I have been better guided; and that I would now fain learn again from you the lessons once learned at your knee. Listen, dear mother: when, those many years ago, I was persuaded to assume the garb of a novice in the monastery which has since been my only home, I did not dream of the wide gulf which would thenceforth separate us. The awakening came too late, for spiritual pride had usurped the domination, and trampled underfoot all that otherwise would have been most dear, while superstition led me to believe that only by constant, aban-

donment of the holiest instincts of humanity, together with the mortification of the flesh, could I merit the Divine favour. I have shown you how I have been otherwise taught of late, how many months ago my attention was attracted to the suspicious movements of our carillon player, and how I discovered his hoard. I need not repeat how my first thought was to denounce the incipient heretic: but other counsels prevailed. I had a liking for the wretched man, as I deemed him to be: and I would snatch him, if possible, from the fate he was braving. To accomplish this I must needs know somewhat of the teaching to which he was giving heed."

"My son, my son; tell me no more. Surely, I understand in part how it has been with you. Guy, once again my son, dead to me once, but alive again: it is little I know, or care to know of heresies. Methinks the world will be better and the Church no worse when Christian shall be the common name of all who own Christ as their Lord. But I am only a poor Beguine, and know little of these high matters. Nevertheless, blessed be God"—and hereupon the speaker gave way to glad tears and much emotion—"that we are no longer to be Brother Guy and Sister Margaret to each other; but mother and son, as of old. If there be sin in that, be it mine, and mine only, to answer for." And hereupon the aged woman fell upon her son's neck and kissed him fervently, as one who had been long lost, but was now restored to her.

The Augustin monk shortly afterwards thoughtfully wended his way through the almost deserted streets to his monastery. He had taken a first step towards freedom from the bondage of Rome. Would he take yet another, and another? Whether the events to be recorded in the following chapter hastened or delayed his decision, remains yet to be seen. For this evening at least, and for many days to come, the monastery must needs be his home.

CHAPTER XVII.

How Count Egmont pacified Ghent.

IN great ill-conceit with his Antwerp cousins, by reason of certain supercilious treatment he considered them to have bestowed on his fugitive friend Hans the printer, Karl Franck had gone back to his home, and declared his own intention of remaining at Ghent or going to sea whenever his father and Lysken paid their visit. In fact, he had what he called "a breeze" with his cousin Agnes, the second daughter; after this fashion:

The young lady had been playing her French spinet, and he lounging by, listening to the music of some of Clement Marôt's psalms.

"Cousin Agnes, I thought Christians were bound to love one another?"

"Yes, truly; the gospel says so."

"It's a sort of relationship, is it not? I think I read in the Testament—'All ye are brethren?'"

"I suppose so—in a certain sense." She began to have an inkling of whither the conversation tended.

"Well, you and Mademoiselle Margaret are scarce civil to

this poor young Christian who has been hunted from his home. You notice him not at all so much as you do your little dog."

"We must remember the social distinctions of life," replied the daughter of the burgher, who had raised himself from an errand-boy.

"Sooner than the precepts of the gospel?"

"Cousin Karl, you are unreasonable."

"Not a whit. Receive this brother in the faith as you did the young Catholic cavalier whom I saw visiting Madam Philippa—"

She opened wide her blue eyes. "Compare a printing youth with Don Ferdinand de Medina!"

"Speak to poor Hans as Nina spoke—"

"Nina! an ignorant child: she knows nothing of the world—"

"And you acknowledge that the gospel tells you not to shape yourself by the ways of the world!"

The argument was invincible; the practice, in every age, has been difficult.

And so it happened that the visit of the poorer Francks to the richer Francks was postponed week by week. The last decade of August arrived, and like wildfire through Brabant and Flanders spread the rumour of the image-breakers.

"Great news, amazing news!" cried Karl, one morning, coming in from the shipping, where he passed a part of most days. His countenance was radiant. "The people have risen in Antwerp, and broken down all the images in all the churches; and they are going to do the same here."

He paused not to explain; and a few minutes afterwards Lysken caught a glimpse of him going out with his dress altered as close to that of an ordinary civilian as he could make

it. "Surely he will mix in any tumult against the old religion," she thought, apprehensively; "he is so zealous, is our Karl. Surely there will be great warfare if they touch the churches, the beautiful rich churches; ah, they dare not!"

In a state of great uneasiness she worked at her lace-pillow, until a tap at the door made her jump. "Oh, Beguine Margaret! I was hoping it might be Karl. He is out, and—have you heard any tidings—any strange news this morning?"

"Everybody in Ghent knows that Nôtre Dame Cathedral at Antwerp has been pillaged, and thirty other churches and monasteries within the walls," replied the Beguine, gravely.

"But is this town quiet?" she asked earnestly. "I have been listening from the open casement for any sounds more than common. Oh, dear Beguine Margaret, what shall we do if the tumults spread to our Ghent?"

"Will Karl be in them?" said the nun, fathoming her distress without difficulty. "Well, child, thy God is able to keep him from doing evil as well as from getting harm. Here is thy father; perhaps he hath more tidings."

The carillon player's indignation had been stirred to the utmost by seeing fragments of the great pipes of the Antwerp organ exposed in the Vrydags Markt. All night they had been dragged about the streets by a noisy handful of rioters. "Oh, the soul of harmony discoursing through those gilded mouths! Oh, what savages to shatter in pieces that marvel of mechanic work!" The carillon player knew nothing else.

In the dusk of evening Karl slipped into the house. Lysken sprang to him, "Oh, dear brother, my heart is glad you are come back! But we heard no riots."

"As if I must needs be in a riot, little sister. Oh no, all has been orderly done by the men of Ghent. And here is a trophy for you, slit from a fine lady's kirtle in St. Bavon's."

He tossed her a strip of velvet, thickly sown with pearls.

"Karl! you do not mean that the cathedral is despoiled?"

"Bare as my palm of images, sir; we touched nought else."

His father lifted up his hands in astonishment. "And where were the magistrates?"

"Sent halberdiers with us, sir, to see that all was done as by agreement, and the niches properly emptied. But I am both hungry and thirsty, little sister."

The story gradually came out.

"Some of us went to Master Junius the minister" (who happened to sojourn in Ghent at the time, as, being over the borders of Brabant, he was out of danger from the warrants issued for his arrest in that province). "We asked his advice, and he threw cold water on our plan. We had no call from Divine Providence to do it. So we left him and his opinions, and followed our own."

"Being so much wiser theologians," said his father.

"We went thence to the high-bailiff of Ghent, and told him we had a commission to demolish graven images within his county. Nothing like boldness! 'tis a sailor's motto," said Karl.

"And is not truth a sailor's virtue?" asked his father.

"Sir, it was but a colourable pretext. Might not the second command be our commission and warranty? The high-bailiff never looked at the folded parchment that one of us held, but desired that we should keep the people quiet a little space, for a great crowd had gathered about the doors; and he sent spearmen, directing that none should presume to oppose us in our pulling down of the images, but that nothing should be taken away."

"Karl, Karl, it was a subterfuge—an unworthy subterfuge; and I have never known such to prosper."

The triumph lasted until the first week of September, when

it began to be whispered that Count Egmont was coming in person to his governorship of Flanders, determined rigidly to punish all concerned in the late image-breakings. Executions began immediately after his arrival. "Twenty heretics and their minister at a single heat," was a performance of his trusted secretary Bakkerzeel.

Egmont had made election between the service of the Catholic king who hated him, and the chieftainship of a Reformed league which might have saved worlds of misery to his hapless country; and had chosen to his own ruin. He had declared that he would not sully his sword by upholding the Inquisition; yet here he crushed heretics as pitilessly as any Inquisitor. Was it not by a species of retribution that the castle of Ghent, his stronghold while he was thus carrying out his master's cruel will on the Reformed, should be a year hence the scene of his own unjust imprisonment and sentence to death?

The inhabitants of Flanders and Artois fled in numbers to the other provinces, or beyond seas. Gerard Franck was counselled to escape while yet there was time, as his Reformed proclivities were well known; but he hoped still that his position as carillon player to a great monastery would induce the fathers to protect him. Obscurity was no shelter; spies were so rife, that even the King of Spain had more than once from his distant Castilian capital indicated the name of an humble heretic, his dress, habits, and appearance, to the Netherland council, while desiring that he should be seized and put to death.[1]

[1] "It is quite a laughable matter," wrote Cardinal Granvelle, first minister in the Netherlands, "that the king should send us depositions made in Spain, by which we are to hunt for heretics here, as if we did not know of thousands already. Would that I had as many doubloons of annual income, as there are public and professed heretics in the provinces."

At last, one night when the harvest moon was high over the towers of Ghent, a paper was thrust into Gerard Franck's hand at his own door. The only writing in it ran thus:

"For life and death.
Joseph took the mother and child, and fled into Egypt, by night.'

They turned the missive over and over.

"He speaketh in parables, whoever be the writer," said Karl, with an uneasy laugh.

"Methinks you need not find it hard of comprehension," rejoined his father. "The man looked like a monk, too. Could it be one of the fathers themselves? But what have I done that I should fly? And leave all my little property —and my invention, so near as it is to being perfected—"

His poor wandering eyes fell upon Lysken, who stood by the stove with clasped hands and downcast look, the picture of despondency.

"My child! my Lysken! get ready, and we will go. And I to mourn over mechanic work, while thou art left to me— while thy safety is in question, dotard that I am!" he muttered, as he went to secure their little stock of money, the only thing they could carry with them.

Safer were the open streets than the house, after that warning; they could steal along in the shadows, or sit in the deep porches of houses. They dared not take shelter with friends, lest their so doing should involve them also; thus hidden they heard the clash of Egmont's troopers galloping about, escorting the officials whose proper business was the arrests and confiscations. A grand raid was made upon heretics' homes that night, and much spoil won for the King of Spain; whose broad seal was set on poor Franck's boxes and tool-chest, as well as on the plate-coffers of the wealthy burghers involved in the same ruin.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Concerning the "Accord."

THE Regent, Margaret of Parma, being sorely frightened by the iconoclasts, even to the point of taking flight, had consented to sign a decree, granting some liberty of worship to the Reformed. All places where preaching had taken place before the twenty-fourth of August were licensed for preaching still; which meant chiefly that in certain meadows and woods it might be lawful to hold Protestant services.

After which concession the noble lady went into her closet, and wrote a despairing letter to her brother the King of Spain; declaring that she had committed the most fearful sin of her life; imploring him not to be bound by her act, but to come as soon as possible to avenge the ancient Church in person.

We of the nineteenth century, to whom the archives of Simancas are open, can see behind the surface of events, and marvel at the unceasing duplicity of the rulers of the Netherlands. But the Reformed, believing there was yet faith in princes, burst into an acclaim of joy. The golden age of

toleration had come! The credulous folk began to talk of building churches, and exercising the rites of their religion.

Count Egmont at Ghent undeceived them in about a fortnight by his severities. Knowing the false heart of the court, he tried to please the Regent by paying no regard whatever to the Accord, in his governments of Flanders and Artois. But the Prince of Orange acted differently, and endeavoured to carry out the decree with justice. He found that in several of the Antwerp churches Reformed preaching had taken place; Herman Stryker the Dominican had twice discoursed to an enormous concourse assembled in the shattered cathedral. Calling the heads of all parties together, the prince at last procured an agreement that three of the city churches should be set apart for use by "the religion," one for each sect; also that "the Inquisition should cease from that time forward for ever!" As if the many-headed monster could be slain by a declaration!

Thus it came to pass that Nina could write in her "diurnal book:"

"I can scarce believe that I have attended Protestant worship in one of our Antwerp churches, cleared of relics and images; and heard the Word of God purely preached by Master Herman, once a monk of St. Dominic.

"Never had I been before at a meeting of our people; because of my infirmity I could not get to the crypt where it was wont to be held, nor yet travel outside the walls as far as the Baron of Berghen's wood to open-air preaching. But when our great prince, the Burgrave, made matters so smooth that certain of the churches within the city were allotted to us, it became possible for me to have this wonderful pleasure. I had several times heard discourses from renowned preachers of the mendicant orders. But this sermon was something quite different. There were no accounts of prodigies and

saintly miracles, which it would tax the faith of the most orthodox Catholic to credit fully; no exaltation of relics, or indulgences, nor talk of the duty of adorning churches and endowing convents. Master Herman did indeed say a few words about building meeting-houses in the waste places where the Reformed had been wont to assemble, and which are now assured to them by the word of the Duchess-regent herself; he exhorted the rich to give of their wealth to this good object. Even the women might sell their jewels, for those meeting-houses would be as it were a scaffolding to God's spiritual temple of souls. And this set me thinking of certain rich trifles I possess, and value only for the love of him who gave them—my dear father; but more of this anon.

"How did that preacher exalt Christ! He said the Papists do not leave our Lord the hundredth part of redemption, with all their makeshifts of masses, aves, disciplines, pilgrimages, prayers to saints. Whereas pardon is wholly from Jesus; none other name under heaven is given for saving of souls.

"I had tablets to my girdle, and noted down a phrase or two.

"'While our condemnation holds us guilty and trembling before the judgment-seat of God, the punishment to which we were subject has been laid upon the innocent. All that can be imputed to us in the sight of God is transferred upon Jesus Christ. The Divine Founder of the kingdom has suffered in place of the children of the kingdom; our peace is only to be found in the pains of Christ our Redeemer.'

"He said these were the words of the celebrated John Calvin. And further:

"'To be useful to us, this doctrine must penetrate into the soul, pass into the manners and regulate the actions of our life. Since the Holy Ghost consecrates us to be the temples of God, we must endeavour earnestly that the glory of God fills the temple!'

THE GOSPEL PREACHED IN THE CHURCHES OF ANTWERP.

"I think I shall remember that last expression for a long time; I shall try to turn it into a prayer. Ah, I am so often cross and out of temper, and bear the pain so badly which God sends me!

"But what was the singing of the Psalms! 'The voice of many waters and mighty thunderings' came into my mind; I could not help shedding tears. 'With His own right hand and with His holy arm hath He gotten Himself the victory!' That singing was more to me than even the sermon. The pent-up feelings of thousands of hearts seemed gushing forth.

Our people are so glad of the Accord, that decree of toleration issued by the Regent. They can walk openly through the streets now, each with his wife and children, to the preaching, none making them afraid. And Aunt Philippa thinks the Church dreadfully dishonoured.

"'But the king will never consent to it—never; he is too ardent a Catholic,' she said, yesterday morning.

"'I fear you are right,' said my father, who does not look at all so hopeful as others of the Reformed. 'An evil day will it be for Antwerp that he refuses.'

"'The blessing of the Church is better than commerce,' rejoined Aunt Philippa, loftily.

"'We may have to test that yet,' was my father's reply. 'Sir Thomas Gresham, the English agent here, has already, as I learn, warned the companies of London merchants that there is little security in our city for their cargoes: and advises that they fix on another port for sale of English commodities —probably Hamburg, at mouth of the Elbe. But more alarming even than this sign of the times, is it to have our own manufacture coming back to us—English cloth woven by Netherland artizans who have been compelled to fly for their lives, and to whom the Queen Elizabeth hath graciously granted asylum.'

"'Of course the queen of the heretics will be glad to injure our sovereign in every possible manner,' said Aunt Philippa. I have noticed more than once, how hateful the very name of that queen is to people of the old religion; even Father Adrian, gentle old man that he is, gets passionate against her, though if she be such a very wicked woman as they say, I cannot imagine why her subjects, who read and love the Bible, can permit her to sit on their throne.

"When we returned from the preaching, I rested awhile in the great hall; and my father sat down beside me, just as he had helped me from the coach. I preferred my request at once. 'Father, I should like to give something my own self to the building of the new church for the Reformed at the Mollekenstraem,' and among other things that were mine own, I mentioned the massive silver cup laid to my place at table, and which bears on it the design of the Good Shepherd and His lambs. 'Father, give me a bowl of brown Dinant ware instead, like thine.'

"'It were not a bad thought, little one:' and he turned himself so as to have in full view the handsome tall beaufets, loaded in three stages with silver plate. 'Only the other day methought that were a display unfitting a Christian man, whose treasury is in heaven. Wouldst be sorry if all were stript away, Nina?'

"I was amazed to hear him talk like this; for well I remember his pride when he procured the griffin's egg[1] mounted with silver, the greatest rarity possible in a drinking-cup; and how often he has shown those silver ornaments to his guests. And now to sell them all! Truly my father is a changed man.

"'Let nothing be done through vainglory,' he repeated, more as if reasoning with himself than speaking to me. 'What is that exhibition but vainglorious? And I cannot

[1] Probably the egg of an ostrich.

aid this building otherwise, the times being hard upon all manner of commerce. That set of hanaps,[1] so richly parcel-gilt, would build many a yard of good wall, within which true and living stones might be hewn out. What say you, little Nina? Shall they go?'

"I never thought till afterwards how much Aunt Philippa would disapprove. For these beaufets of plate adorn every wealthy burgher's house.

"Another great surprise in the evening.

"I was in my own chamber through fatigue, and indeed desiring to ponder over what I had heard, and note down some of it in this diurnal-book; when my father brought to me my uncle, Gerard Franck, and Cousin Lysken.

"I liked her at once, though she was very shy, and spoke hardly a word; and I thought of the fable by Master Æsop about the hare and the frogs whom he frightened when he was himself running away from the hounds. Could it be possible she was afraid of me, who am afraid of nearly every-body myself? They had come away from Ghent in great haste, owing to a warning received from some unknown person. Evidently the Reformed are not safe there, as here under our good Prince of Orange.

"My uncle also looks kind and grave, but troubled, and has the humble air of a poor man: I heard him tell my father he had lost everything.

"'Then I might say to you the words of our Lord, Gerard —"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven!" He has provided already for your temporal needs—I have enough for both: and art thou not only my brother in the flesh, but also in the Lord?' With that poor Uncle Gerard's face brightened, and a ray of joy lit up Lysken's likewise.

[1] Cups on stems, with or without covers.

"I reached forth my hand. 'Lysken, we are only cousins; but shall we not be sisters in the Lord?' When she kissed me, her eyes were bright with tears.

"'Karl said he was sure you were good and kind,' she said, grateful for the little sympathy.

"'Where is Karl?'

"'Gone to look for his old ship, to take service in her for the Indies again. Ah, my Karl!' It seemed to escape her without intention—such a heavy sigh.

"'You will not see him for a long time?'

"'Not for years; perhaps never.'

"'Lysken, trust thy God better than to be foreboding ill!'

"'I would not mistrust Him; but perchance it may be His will that I should see Karl no more, as it has been His will we should leave our pleasant little home and lose all our goods.'

"Her soul dwelt in bitterness just now, this poor Lysken.

"'For thy sake and the Gospel's,' were words of Christ which rose involuntarily to my lips. 'Ah, Lysken, you will have a blessing more than any of us!'

"The bright look returned; and I knew that she was a true believer in Christ, despite her sadness, for she could draw comfort from His sayings.

"And as to your brother, think not so unkindly of your God that He intendeth you pain,' I said. 'Is He not our Father in heaven? So whatever He sends us that seems an evil, must be good in earnest; don't you think so, Cousin Lysken? I would not expect of my own dear father a hard action to hurt me?'

"Of course, Lysken knew it all quite well: but she was soothed to hear it afresh. 'God has allowed us to lose everything,' she repeated, in a doubting way; 'while those bad persecutors are full of riches and power!'

"'You are to live for ever in His heaven, in one of His

many mansions, Lysken; and don't you think He will make amends then?'

"I persuaded my father to go to the dark closet in the wainscot of his chamber, where he keeps the prohibited books, and asked him to leave me a Flemish Bible. There is something in the Psalms so very like what Lysken was saying, and I wanted to search it out.

"Also I read to her these words which I had copied into my book, concerning the reason that the Christian man hath more sorrow than the worldly man:—

"'The corn is first threshed in the barn along with the straw; but afterwards it is pressed and crushed alone by the millstone.'

"But the wheat is to be gathered into Christ's garner with eternal joy; the chaff is to be burned with unquenchable fire.

"I have found out that one great cause of Lysken's anxiety about Karl is, that she does not think him a real believer. 'If I knew he was truly converted to the faith of Jesus Christ,' she said, in tears, 'I could let him go to the ends of the world.'

"I replied that from his conversation he seemed very devoted to the religion.

"'Ah, but there is a difference. It is not that he loves our Lord and His truth, but that he hates popery. He would hew down images, and face danger like a hero; but he relies not on our Saviour as I would wish to see. I fear—I fear that he has not the true love of Christ in his heart!'

"'We will pray that he may have, dear Lysken. Rememberest not the sure word—"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that ye shall ask, it shall be done?"'

"Lysken has been allowed to share my chamber. I am sure we shall be very happy together—at least I shall be; for I feel her like a new sister already; and she has never

had one. But her regrets are many for the home in Ghent; and she knows not how my uncle Gerard can live idle. It seems he is a great mechanician and inventor, and had nearly completed a most wonderful instrument of music, which would make him very famous, could he only finish it."

* * * * *

"My father has found a place for Karl in a merchant ship of his going round to Venice, and promoted him to be supercargo. This will not be so long a voyage as to the Indies, and in much safer seas. Lysken looked almost satisfied as she bade him farewell."

CHAPTER XIX.

The Spreading of Light.

EIGHT hundred guilders had been set on the head of Franciscus Junius by Count Egmont, the pacificator of Ghent. That is to say, eight hundred if he were taken alive, in order to be put to death in the orthodox way with pine fagots; but four hundred only if his corpse were delivered to the authorities. The high-bailiff of Ghent came to apprehend him, but he had just left his lodging, "by chance," as men say.

Marvellous were his escapes. An order was published that no person should go by water to the Carthusians (a place outside Ghent where the Reformed met for worship), lest weapons might be concealed in the boats. Junius had not heard of this prohibition, and went in a barge, as usual. "In the meantime the high-bailiff, with a number of halberdiers, waited for them on the bridge near the gate by which they were to pass, and spying them at a distance, ran to meet them on the shore. All the people in the boat being amazed and dejected, were in great pain for Junius, and cast about what they should

do; but he, relying upon God, bade them be of good cheer, and not to have the least concern for him any more than if he were not present." The passengers were ordered instantly to leave the boat, and Junius came out in his turn. When passing through the halberdiers, he saluted their captain, who, sitting on horseback, returned the compliment very civilly, keeping a sharp eye meanwhile on the boat, to observe whether there might not still be somebody concealed in it. Thus he escaped that snare: and in his relation of the occurrence concludes,—"Trust then to the Providence of the Lord, thou that servest the Lord, and acquiesce in His certain truth and sure faith; for the Lord who watches over us is faithful."

Shortly afterwards he was preaching in a country town near Bruges, and being warned of search made for him, determined to spend the night in the fields, so as to endanger no one by sheltering in a house. But a messenger from the Reformed at Bruges found him out, and besought him to go thither, within the very walls where Count Egmont happened at the time to sojourn. Regarding it as a call from God, he went, disguised in the garb of a peasant with whom he changed clothes. Being admitted into the town by the wicket, he passed through all the watches undiscovered; for it had pleased God very providentially to join to the watch that night a burgher of Bruges, who, not intending any such thing, paved the way for him without opposition or examination: for he, taking the minister to be one of his acquaintance, spoke familiarly to him, to Junius's great surprise. Thus being himself deceived, he undesignedly deceived the watch, to the great advantage of the Reformed Church.

But Junius dared not remain long in any one place. He came again to Antwerp, and one evening presented himself

at the porch of burgher Franck's house, with him a monk wearing cowl and scapular.

Now if there was one among the Reformed ministers whom Madam Philippa hated more perfectly than others, it was the pastor Junius. To him she attributed her brother's lamentable perversion; it was from one of his fervid sermons that the burgher had returned home like a man blinded by excess of light, and had cast off priestly trammels at once and for ever. She would at any time have been glad to hear of his being arrested, for she sincerely believed that he was deluding souls to their eternal ruin. Aware of these strong sentiments, burgher Franck whispered on the threshold—"You must be Maître François, a Walloon gentleman of my acquaintance, and this reverend friar——"

"Give him thy right hand of fellowship: a brother indeed —chosen and faithful—saved out of the great Babylon!"

A gleam of satisfaction passed over the pale ascetic face, as he received cordial welcome; and all went into the hall, where the supper-table was spread, and a ruddy wood fire burned behind the andirons.

They had much exchange of news. Public prints existed not in those days, nor regular posts; but the Reformed everywhere kept up an intercommunication on matters affecting their own interests; with wondrous rapidity did such tidings travel throughout the land, and even from distant Wittenberg and Geneva. Soon the conversation flowed briskly, though guardedly, during the ensuing meal.

Madam Philippa, who sat at the supper-table with a long-handled fan shading her face, glanced from time to time sharply at the Walloon gentleman, and continued to watch him from behind it; also the stranger monk, whom she had vainly tried to draw into conversation.

Other news was presently dwelt upon, as coming from

Amsterdam and Leyden, Utrecht and Delft, where the Prince of Orange was stadtholder. Under his benignant toleration, the Churches of the Reformed had begun publicly to organize themselves and to establish ministers.

"Lutheran and Calvanist agree beyond Rhine, it seems," remarked burgher Franck, as they discussed these matters. "It were much to be wished they could do so in Antwerp."

"Alas for these divisions!" said Maître François. "It is wonderful how a little lull in the fury of our enemies brings them out as virulent as ever."

Madam Philippa smiled a pitying smile, and remarked on the unity of doctrine and practice in the Church Catholic.

"Yes, lady, the uniformity of death," rejoined the Walloon gentleman. "Life must show itself in supposititious diverseness. But as to the variance between the theological systems of the heads of the Reformation, I have studied it, and found essential oneness. Salvation for nothing—salvation God's free gift to guilty sinners, is the ground whereon both stand. But Master Luther looked at it from the human point of view, and made justification by faith his crowning article; Master Calvin was jealous for the honour of God, and the sovereign power of God seemed to him the most important point. And further——"

The lady arose, and with a sweeping courtesy to the strangers intimated that she did not require instruction in any new creeds; she was satisfied with what had been believed by the fathers and all the saints.

"Can I have speech of that lady?" said the monk, pushing back his cowl, as if just woke out of a reverie. "She is a soul still in darkness, needing Christ's gospel as much as any idolater of them all!"

But Madam Philippa sent back a reply to his humble request for an interview, that if he were a renegade from his

order, as she suspected, she could have naught to do with such an one. To which he made no answer, but, drawing a book from his broad sleeve, appeared presently deep in the study of it, until Gerard Franck and his daughter, who had been absent at a secret religious meeting, to which they had procured access, came in, when he raised his head, recognizing the voice of the former. Gerard, on his side, no sooner saw the face than a curdling of fear ran to his timid old heart. Come to spy him out in this retreat—could it be?

The monk saw the apprehension. "Truly I may be mistrusted," said he; "but thou dost not think it a thing too hard for the Lord's grace to enlighten Guy Regis the persecutor?"

That marvel seemed to swallow up all other ideas of the carillon player; it is doubtful if he heard anything of the conversation ensuing. He drew a paper from his doublet, and placed it before the monk, who involuntarily smiled.

"Then it is to thee that we owe escape and life," said Gerard Franck. "Good friend, God reward thy kind service!"

"I was but repaying the deliverance thy book of Master Luther had begun for me," he answered; and a few words of explanation followed. "Good burgher, couldst give me the use of writing material?"

They adjourned to a small oriel chamber at the end of the hall, where the monk sat down, and was presently absorbed in his composition, making frequent reference to the small book he had drawn from his sleeve.

He was roused by the appeal of Junius to him by name. "The Antwerp churches are closed again; so thy preaching here is scarce possible, Brother Guy Regis."

"Wherefore? Do not the suburbs stand, and the woods?—ay, and the market-place? Fear not but I shall find pulpits enow;" and he bent again to his writing.

"The Word is as a fire in his bones," whispered Junius; "he rests not day and night till he can preach the faith that once he destroyed; and much I fear me that the career of such zeal must be short."

"And his mother, the Beguine Margaret?" asked Gerard Franck.

"Ah! she is not far from the kingdom; she wept over him and blessed him, and went back to her Beguinage to pray for him. A holy woman, friend Franck, though she holdeth not altogether with us; but the root of the matter is in her."

"Burgher! will you give this to the lady who would have no converse with a renegade?" It was the writing on which he had been engaged. "I show her that Christ's words supersede all fathers' and saints' words; that the Reformed is no 'new religion,' but the faith of apostles and martyrs revived; I tell her that my own life possessed no ray of peace till I saw how Christ had done everything for me; and I had nought to do but receive salvation from Him, and let Him reign in my heart. Perhaps she may hearken to the voice of one just risen from the dead."

He stood up, drawing his cowl forward, and tightened the girdle of his serge gown.

"Brother, I go to the convent of St. Augustine. The taunting word awhile agone did remind me that I have a duty still toward mine order. Why should those monks never hear the gospel? Nay, detain me not; they are bound to show hospitality to strangers, and some of them know me already. I shall come to no harm; and if I do, the evil my God permits is good."

But burgher Franck laid on him his hand.

"It is a terrible risk; in this city of ours there hath been many a secret execution. I mind me of the good deacon of the Church of the Holy Cross, John de Boscher, whom they

essayed to drown privately in the prison, and finally thrust through with a sword. None knew at the time what became of him; he bore no public testimony by his death. Dear brother, beware what you do; cast not away God's gift of mortal life."

"Bore he no public testimony, sayest thou?" and the ardent monk pushed back his cowl. "Unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places was that witness; rank over rank of angels may have peopled that dungeon, and surely received that triumphant soul. Tempt me not, burgher; woe is upon me if I preach not the gospel! Rather say unto me, God speed!"

Nothing could alter his purpose; into the falling darkness of the streets he strode forth, with the book that could burn him in his bosom.

Madam Philippa did not reject his writing, but locked it away in a curious cabinet of many drawers which stood in her apartment. "Floris," she said, "I ought to tell you that this night I have not been deceived. Your Maître François, a Walloon gentleman with theology at his fingers' ends, is the hateful Genevan heretic Junius. Do not bring him within this house too often, I beseech you."

An expression her brother did not immediately understand gleamed in her eyes. Thinking over it afterwards, two ideas came to the surface; the confessional, and the household spy at the confessional.

CHAPTER XX.

The Beguine Margaret's Joy.

THE daring monk came unscathed out of that wolf's mouth, the Augustinian monastery; but even he acknowledged that the experiment was too hazardous to be repeated. During the morning meal in the refectory he had asked leave to take the place of the brother whose turn it was to read aloud, which was willingly yielded, as some new incident in the monotonous monkish round. A great black-letter tome of St. Augustine's works lay on the desk, overlaid by the usual "Acta Sanctorum" and Psalter of St. Bonaventure; these he put aside, and from the founder of the order he read a few sentences.

"Fecisti nos ad te, Domine, et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te!"[1]

And again:

"O Christian soul, look on the wounds of the suffering One, the blood of the dying One, the price paid for our redemption. Think how great these things be, and weigh

[1] "O Lord, for Thyself hast Thou made us: and restless is our heart until it rests in Thee."

them in the balance of thy mind, that He may be wholly nailed to thy heart, who for thee was all nailed unto the cross!"

It was a very uncommon manner of reading, no doubt. The monks looked up from their trenchers, stirred by the ringing intonation, the utterance ingrained with conviction; so different from the monotonous mumbling of a legend, which they were accustomed to hear. He broke off and began to speak, and in a sort of running commentary preached fully and forcibly (for the time was short and the opportunity precious) the glad tidings of free salvation.

Whisperings and murmurings arose ere he had done, and the sub-prior, scenting heresy in some statement, bade him be silent and come down. He obeyed; the seed had been sown, though out of season; and faith cometh by hearing.

The monks dispersed in agitation; the offender was closeted with the sub-prior. Stoutly he maintained that none but the doctrines of Augustine had he preached; and the official, not being learned enough to contest the point, and dearly loving a quiet life, presently bade him go his way and trouble them no more.

And so Guy Regis was not imprisoned, but went forth anywhither, to preach the gospel he had so lately learned. Out of all grooves did he step emancipated, who had been bound with the iron of monastic rule. To no synod did he give himself up, nor enrol himself in a council of preachers; he wanted not a settled charge, but work on the outskirts and in the dangerous places of the nascent church. Risk could not deter him, but rather had a fascination for his footsteps. In wayside hostelries, in barges on the canals, in lonely farmhouses, in obscure lanes of cities, he itinerated far and wide, publishing his message wherever there was a soul to hear and be saved. Out on bare heaths, down in fishers' hamlets

among the sand-hills, he gathered the sparse population to hear this new thing: "God so loved the world as to send His only Son." In village market-places he took his station beside the well, and told the women of the Living Water. By such agency as his, by such incessant zeal, were many provinces of the seventeen Netherlands filled with masses of Protestant believers among "the common people." His very daring seemed his defence; for he wore no disguises. The previously ascetic life he had led enabled him to endure hardships of lying in open fields, and going long without food; and his spirit seemed to burn the brighter for it all.

Once in the spring months of 1567, the Beguine Margaret, his mother, coming into her little tiled kitchen after a day's ministering among the poor, found him waiting for her in the dusk. She, who knew how his name had been cast out as evil, how the lesser and the greater excommunication had been fulminated against him, with every portentous anathema of the Church (there had not been wanting a foolish friendly old Beguine to pick up every detail and record it to the mother's shrinking heart), was terrified for his safety here in the Beguinage.

"Fear not, mother; my life is hid with Christ in God! The Inquisition cannot reach it there!"

A brief interview, but a renewal of olden joys to the poor mother, who found the child's heart in her son again. What an humble delight it was to prepare supper for him, to enact even once the scene of the family, which the ordinances and will-worship of men had broken and rendered impossible! Ah, the gaunt worn face which she remembered as so round and tender! And Ulric, the stupid orphan boy whom she had adopted, actually stood within the circle of his arm while repeating his Credo before bedtime, and getting a rare exposition of the same.

"Now, mother, I have a message for thee to take to a poor soul that liveth by lace-work in a lane near my old convent. I saw her son in Leyden, a printing youth, whose name I mind not, and he gave me a letter for her, which is shut in my staff."

The monk unscrewed a thick handle, and pulled out more than one paper, rolled up tightly in small compass. "I promised she should receive it without fail, when I should visit Ghent."

Often did the wandering pastors bear news between the Churches thus; and even now Regis was the bearer of communications which required him to go on to Antwerp immediately.

The Beguine knew the poor widow Van Muler, and had done her own part to shelter her and her family in the storm that Count Egmont originated. From a lenient old priest of her acquaintance she procured the required certificate that the widow was no dangerous character, but a good Christian; and under the egis of this scrap of paper she was left to work her lace in peace, and send up a prayer for Hans. His letter begged of her to break up house, and go north to him. He was earning enough for all at the printing trade, and had begun to love the quaint Dutch city, with its canal-streets and alleys of linden. Moreover the Reformed were in less danger where the Prince of Orange held the authoritative position of stadtholder,—already was his name an anchor of hope.

Proud and grateful was the poor widow over that letter, and many times the moisture dimmed her cumbrous spectacles ere it was read through. Her Hans was now a man,—that was part of the emotion. He had left her a boy, and had grown in a few months to the maturity of a tried character, under the educating pressure of responsibilities, than which there is no abler educator. "And thou wilt go to him?" asked the kind Beguine.

"That is matter for prayer to God," she answered. "I will ask Him to guide me as He would have me move."

But we are anticipating next day's events. All the Beguine's persuasions could not induce her son to rest from his journey in Ghent for even one night. "Nay, the darkness is my best travelling time, mother." How she liked that word from his lips!—and he spoke it often in this interview, as if resuming the long-broken relationship.

"To lose thee just as I have found thee!" she exclaimed.

"Being safe in the love of our Lord, each can never lose the other," he answered, quietly. "Long eternity is coming, mother! 'We shall see His face, and His name shall be in our foreheads.'"

He gazed, as in abstraction, at the fire for a few moments, and then stooping forward, kissed her aged hands, rose up, and went away, his countenance lifted to the heaven of stars. His cowl procured him ready pass from the drowsy burgher watch at the gates of the city. For the livelong night he travelled over the level shadowed lands towards great Antwerp. Did he want for company on the lonely road? God had given his ardent spirit a most lively apprehension of that mighty world of unseen beings which encompasses this earth so closely; and not only did Guy Regis believe that angels were nigh, but that his own beloved Saviour Jesus Christ, for whom he was ready to be bound, and also to die, was within reach of a word, a thought,—nay, was beside him, even without appeal.

Long before reaching the suburbs of the great city he became aware of a ruddy gleam, as of numerous watch-fires of a camp. "They have pitched near Ostrawell," he said to himself, recognizing the localities. He now walked warily, as in an enemy's country, noting every sign; for though he had not chosen to tell his mother of it, he knew that a band of

men, who called themselves "the Reformed," and were led by a brave youth, Marnix of Thoulouse, brother to the famous St. Aldegonde, had come up the Scheldt in boats, and pitched their camp in a strong position among the sheltering dykes. Battle and bloodshed there would be to a certainty, as soon as the Catholic troops under the Seigneur de Beauvoir should arrive.

And this very night of 12th March, 1567, they were arriving, hot and eager for the fray: among them four hundred of those veteran Walloons of Egmont, who hated heretics to the death. In small parties they stole along by unfrequented paths, having rendezvous with their leader at the abbey of St. Bernard, a league from Antwerp walls.

"What would the morrow bring forth?"

CHAPTER XXI.

Some Extracts from Nina's Journal.

MARCH the 1st, 1567.—They are gone from us,—my uncle Gerard and my sweet cousin Lysken, who embarked yesterday for Rotterdam, thence on to Leyden, where they hope to have a quiet home. They departed under the care of one Kasper Arnoldzoon, who has endured much persecution because of his faith, and who is very earnest in spreading abroad the knowledge of the true gospel. It is well that it should be so, yet it leaves me sad and full of trouble; for my cousin was to me as a very dear sister,—so loving and gentle, yet so earnest and brave.

I will not speak much of the cause of their leaving us; yet may I write down here that the present confusion around us, which seems daily increasing, so alarmed my uncle, that he has been driven to seek safety in greater obscurity. I fear me he will seek it in vain; for, alas! neither poverty, nor obscurity, nor attempted concealment, can long keep in safety in this unhappy land any who are faithful to the truth, as I think Gerard Franck to be, and as I am sure my dear cousin Lysken is.

Yet I must needs confess that this timid fear is not the only reason which has led to this separation. Ours is a divided household; Aunt Philippa is become, as it seems, more bitter against all who think not with her. True, she stands in awe of my father, and in his presence restrains her speech; but she has constant bickerings with Margaret and Agnes, because of her religion; and they, methinks, do not always remember what the apostle tells us of that wisdom which is from above,—that is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated. I fear me, too, that they sometimes fail in that reverence which should be paid to our elders. And then it grieved me much to see that while my aunt disliked my uncle Gerard and Lysken because of their faith in the gospel, my sisters despised them because of their lowly condition; therefore I blame them not for departing, though I shall sorely miss the companionship of my cousin. May God speed them on their journey, and ever have them in safe keeping! My dear father gave them a letter to a friend of his in Leyden, commending them to his care; nor did he suffer them to go empty-handed, but has made provision for their future sustenance; though Lysken would fain not have had it so, for she feels assured that her skill in lace-making will suffice for their maintenance. And so Kasper Arnoldzoon also told her, and he is a dealer in such wares.

And this puts me in mind that Lysken and that young man seem mightily fond of each other. I guessed this by Lysken's brightened countenance when first his name was spoken of; and methought I saw it more clearly when they met. I spoke of this to my cousin, and she blushed a little when she replied, "How could one help feeling an interest in a brave, godly youth, who had borne so much for the gospel's sake, and who is in daily peril because of the work of faith in which he is engaged?" I could not refute this, nor deny to

myself that Kasper has much intelligence and an excellent bearing, and is also well favoured; yet had I rather it were not so with my sweet cousin, who might surely look higher, if she must needs ever marry. But, ah me! this is worldly pride, and it becomes me to recollect that my own dear father is as lowly in birth, and was once as poor and despised as this young dealer in lace. Yet surely this is not a time to be thinking of marrying and giving in marriage!

March the 8th.—My heart is sad to-day. Let me take for my text the words of the ninety-third Psalm: "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea."

I would that I could feel this holy confidence; but I am very weak. Lord, increase my faith!

My dear father has been sitting with me, and has tried to encourage me; but even he cannot hide from himself that there is great ground for fear. The whole city is in confusion and tumult. Count Brederode has departed for a time with his troops; he is gone to the north to busy himself with further enrolments; but it is said that he means to return. And meanwhile there is a great gathering at Ostrawell, within sight of the city walls, under a young leader, who is brother to the lord of Saint Aldegonde. My father tells us that this young man is, like his brother, a sincere convert from the Church of Rome, but that his followers are, for the most part, like those who went to David at the cave of Adullam,—being such as are in distress, or in debt, or discontented. My father also says that Marnix of Thoulouse (which is the young leader's name) has no experience; and that it seems madness in him to undertake such a daring piece of rebellion against the

Regent. All these things make me troubled; yet "the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters."

There are other troubles besides these, and, alas! alas! I have lost my pleasant companion and dear comforter, darling Lysken; and Ursel does nothing but groan and pour out doleful lamentations, fearing lest the old stork, which has for so many years had a home in our house-top, should not return with the summer. And truly it would not be strange if he does not, seeing what constant din is around us,—enough, one would think, to keep away a whole colony of storks.

But I write of other and greater matters than this foolish fancy. It seems as though the spirit of discord had broken loose among those who should be of one heart and mind,—I mean those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and are earnest in their testimony against the lying vanities of Rome; for even these are bitter towards each other, there being two great parties, the Lutherans and the Calvinists, who so revile each other, that it is a cause of triumph to the Catholics. So my father says; and indeed I partly experience and witness this every day in our own household. And I am weary of all this, wondering how it can be, that they who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts can find room there for such petty jealousies and unholy strife. Methinks sometimes I could fain say, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! then would I fly away, and be at rest; I would wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." Yet this is but selfishness. Let me rather think of those who are dear to me, and be content to share with them in any trials it may please our heavenly Father to send.

March the 9th.—My father brought with him to-day, to have dinner with us, a young gentleman, Paul Merula by

name, an advocate, whom some law business has brought to the city. He comes from Leyden, and is the person to whom my father commended his brother and dear Lysken. He has good news of them; they reached Leyden in safety, and are well. He also says he will watch over them to the best of his power, though he himself has to walk a wary path, being one of the Reformed.

The gentleman stayed with us through the afternoon, and discoursed very freely on the present state of affairs. He disapproves of the violent measures taken by some of the Reformed for the redress of their grievances; and herein my father agreed with him, although they both admitted that the course taken by the Regent is such as may well excuse those who put no further trust in princes. And hereupon followed some further discourse, which I shall not write down. But presently our visitor told us of a scene he himself had partly witnessed some twelve years since, when he was a boy.

"There was at Lisle," said he, "a certain man named Robert Oguier, a good man, who fell under the suspicion of having prohibited books in his possession, and was also known to be one of the Reformed. One night, therefore, the inquisitors made diligent search through his house, and, finding what they sought, they apprehended not only the man, but also his wife and his two sons, Baldwin and Martin. On the following day, the prisoners were taken before the magistrate, and charged with neglecting to go to mass, and keeping unlawful conventicles in the house,—which indeed was true, as the man himself owned.

"'I do not go to mass,' he said, 'because the precious blood of Jesus Christ and His oblation of Himself is thereby rendered void and of none effect; for Christ did, by one only sacrifice, perfect for ever them that are sanctified. The apostle,' continued he, 'mentions only one oblation; and we

read not of mass in the Holy Scriptures, but only of the Lord's Supper, which is not a sacrifice, but a remembrance. The mass is but a human invention.

"'I own likewise,' said the accused, 'that I have kept assemblies, or meetings of good and godly people; but such meetings were not prejudicial to the government by any means, but rather promoted the honour and glory of our Saviour. I know very well,' he confessed, 'that these meetings are forbidden; but I know, at the same time, that Christ has commanded them,—so that if I obeyed my prince, I must disobey God. I will therefore rather obey the Lord than men.'

"After making this noble confession, Oguier was asked by one of the magistrates, 'What do you in your meetings?'

"And thereupon Baldwin, the elder son, answered:

"'I will give your lordships a full account of this matter. When we are there come together in the name of the Lord, to hear His holy Word, we all fall down at once upon our knees to the ground, and confess humbly our sins. Then we all join in the same prayer, to wit, that God's Word may be purely preached to us, and rightly understood by us. We also pray for our sovereign lord, the emperor, and for all his council, that the commonwealth may be governed with peace, and to the glory of God. And you, my lords, are not forgotten by us; we pray to the Lord for you, and for the whole city, and that He would support you in what is true and just. Can you therefore believe,' continued he, 'that our meeting together for these purposes is as criminal as has been represented to you? And as a proof of what I have told you, I am ready now, if it pleaseth you, my lords, to recite these prayers before you.'

"Some of the judges made a sign that he should do so; whereupon he kneeled down before them, and poured forth his prayer with such a hearty zeal, fervency of spirit, and

vehement emotion, that it drew tears from the eyes of his judges.

"Yet for all this the examination was continued, and presently all the prisoners were put to the rack, to compel them to confess who they were that frequented their meetings; but they would name none on whom the fearful Inquisition could lay hands. So, four or five days afterwards, the father and the elder son were condemned to the fire."

And this is what our visitor saw:

As they were being led away to the stake some of the monks would have persuaded the father to carry in his hand an image of Christ crucified, and they placed the crucifix in his hands; but the son snatched it away, crying, "Father, what is it you do? Will you turn idolater at the point of death? Let not the people be scandalized," continued he, as he cast away the image, "because we desire to worship no wooden Christ. For we bear about Christ Jesus, the Son of the living God, in our hearts, and we have His holy Word written there in golden letters." Then, mounting the scaffold, he begged leave to make a confession of his faith in the hearing of the people. But the answer they made him was,—

"There is your father confessor. If you have anything to confess, you may disclose it to him." And then they drew him nearer to the stake.

Presently, when the executioner was fastening the martyrs to the stake, he struck Robert, the father, on the foot with a heavy hammer.

"My friend, why do you use me thus cruelly?" said the sufferer. A monk, hearing this, cried out,—

"Oh, these wretches! They would be accounted martyrs; and yet if they be handled a little roughly, they squall as if they were murdered."

To this the son replied thus: "Do you think then that we

fear pain or death? Had we feared these we should not have exposed our bodies to this shameful end." Then he repeated several times, "O God, the eternal Father, grant that this sacrifice of our bodies may be acceptable in Thy sight, for the sake of Thy well-beloved Son!"

Then one of the crowd called out with a loud voice, "Courage, Baldwin, be of good heart; your cause is a just one; I am one of yours." And after this, as our visitor told us, when the fire was lighted, the father and son were heard talking lovingly, and encouraging each other, even when the flames were at the highest, until they both expired.

This was the story told by the young gentleman of what he himself had witnessed. He also told how that the mother and younger brother, some time after, were burnt in like manner for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. Methinks when I hear of these things, how glorious it is to suffer thus, so that we may hereafter reign with Him. And I know not how it is, but the thought of that after glory takes away the horrors of these present torments;—I mean in those who are called to bear them.

March the 12th.—The whole city is in greater confusion than ever. Those who had been to the camp at Ostrawell report that there are many hundreds of men there prepared to do battle, only that there is no enemy within sight or hearing. They say also that those soldiers are among the dissolutest they have ever seen, for drinking and dicing. I trust this is a false report; for what have those who fight for conscience and religion to do with such things? I said this to-day at the dinner-table; and Aunt Philippa took me up sharply, bidding me not tie up conscience and religion in a leash with rebellion. My dear father said nothing, but he sighed very deeply.

Afterwards he told me, when we were by ourselves, that what troubles him more than all these outward commotions, is that those in this city who ought to love each other as brothers in Christ are ready, like some in old times, to bite and devour one another. There have already been great tumults, in which the ancient strife seems to be revived, who shall be greatest—the Lutherans or the Calvinists? But surely they forget the saying of the great Master, "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be least of all, and servant of all."

March the 13th, early in the morning. The fighting is begun at Ostrawell. We were roused at day-break by the distant sound of musketry, and then the city was all astir. My father went out, and is not yet come home; but Ursel, who has been abroad and has even now returned, tells me that the city walls are crowded, and there is a report that the rebels (as they are called) are fleeing fast from Count de Beauvoir and his troops, who took them by surprise. Hark! there is my dear father just come in: I know his footsteps. I can write no more now.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Fight and Flight of Ostrawell.

THE ex-monk, Guy Regis, threaded his way with caution through the darkness, towards the camp fires which burned at Ostrawell. And it was not without sufficient reason; for, among other letters of minor importance, he bore, in the hollow of his staff, despatches from the chief of the Gueux to the leader of the insurgent band; and little would the white cowl he still wore have protected him had he fallen into the hands of any of the Regent's forces. He passed on uninterruptedly, however, until, reaching one of the outposts of the camp, he gave himself up to the guard, and demanded to be led to the leader's tent.

The countenance of young Marnix flushed with enthusiasm as he read the communication of Count Brederode, which informed him that ere long he should take the field with six thousand soldiers, and that the two leaders, having united their troops, could march on to Valenciennes and dictate peace on their own terms.

"You bring me good tidings," said the youthful commander to the messenger, "and that in spite of your monkish attire."

"I trust they may prove so," returned Guy; "at any rate, it is certain that Count Brederode has met with great success in Holland; and if you can but hold out against the enemy until such time as he marches hither, much may be hoped for."

"I see not why we should not hold out," returned the inexperienced soldier; "we are well entrenched. We have already three thousand in our camp, and numbers are daily flocking to us; meanwhile, our enemies are keeping at a prudent distance."

"There are rumours, nevertheless, that an attack is planned. The monkish attire which you ridicule has been of this good service to me, that it has shielded me from suspicion on the road, and it has helped me to the knowledge that De Beauvoir is not far off. And where he is, mischief is at his right hand."

"We can meet it," said Marnix, composedly; "but," added he, smiling good-humouredly, "if your information amounts only to this, that where there is warfare there is also a risk of having to fight, it amounts but to little. And if Philip Launoy makes his appearance—of which there has yet been no sign—he will find us prepared to receive him."

The messenger bowed; and being presently dismissed from the tent, he walked slowly through the encampment, pensive and sad as he gazed upon the groups of doomed men (as he might well have deemed them to be) who clustered round the watch-fires in careless false security, some already stretched in heavy sleep, others engaged in gambling. Indeed, the preacher heard and saw enough to prove that, however sincere in his religious faith the young leader might be, he was surrounded partly by reprobates, who had no religion, and partly by others who, in the enthusiasm of the stirring times, had taken up arms for what they believed to be the right, but were destitute of all soldierly qualifications.[1]

[1] "The troops of Marnix," says the historian, "were new levies, vagabonds, and outlaws."

GUY REGIS ON HIS WAY THROUGH THE CAMP.

Again and again did Guy Regis address himself to one party after another of these would-be soldiers, urging upon them the duties of self-examination and preparation for death and judgment. But he spoke to unwilling hearers. Some of them mocked him; by others he was denounced and abused as a spy who had crept into their camp under false pretences, or reviled for his monkish habit; by all he was requested to carry his croakings elsewhere, and rid them of his undesired company. So at length he withdrew, sick at heart, and, wearied with his journey, sought a retired nook within the entrenchment, where he might pour out his soul before God, and then snatch a few hours of uneasy repose.

While the camp of Marnix of Thoulouse was revelling in fancied safety, another scene presented itself at the not far distant abbey of St. Bernard. Through the night, small parties of soldiers, to the number of about eight hundred, armed only with swords and daggers, were silently gathering together within its walls. Here, their helmets, bucklers, arquebusses, corselets, spears, standards and drums were given to them; and they were supplied with refreshments. At break of day they were joined by their leader, Philip de Launoy, Seigneur de Beauvoir, who made them a brief speech, instructing them, among other things, that they were "to advance with furled banners and without beat of drum till within sight of the enemy.

"The troops started. . . . After a short march they were in full sight of Ostrawell. Then they displayed their flags, and advanced upon the fort with loud shoutings. Thoulouse was as much taken by surprise as though they had suddenly emerged from the bowels of the earth. He had been informed that the government was in extreme trepidation; and when he first heard the advancing trumpets and sudden shouts, he thought that a detachment of Brederode's promised force

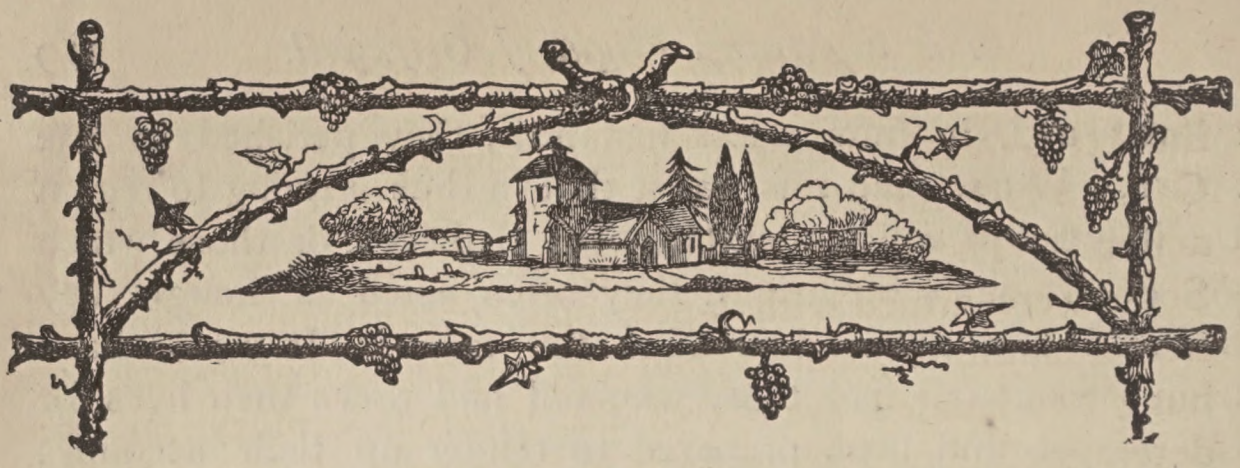
was already arrived. The cross on the banners soon undeceived him; nevertheless, like a brave and generous young gentleman as he was, he lost no time in drawing up his men for action, imploring them to defend their breastworks, which were impregnable against so small a force, and instructed them to wait patiently with their fire till the enemy were near enough to be marked.

'These orders were disobeyed. The youthful commander had no power to infuse his own spirit into his rabble rout of followers, who were already panic-struck by the unexpected appearance of the enemy,"—and the large majority of whom had no religious enthusiasm to sustain them. On the other hand, "the Catholics came on with the coolness of veterans, taking as deliberate aim as if it had been they, not their enemies, who were behind breastworks. The troops of Thoulouse fired wildly, precipitately, quite over the heads of the assailants. Many of the defenders were slain as fast as they showed themselves above their bulwarks. The ditch was crossed, the breastwork was carried at a single determined charge. The rebels made little resistance, but fled as soon as the enemy entered their fort. It was a hunt, not a battle. Hundreds were stretched dead in the camp, hundreds were driven into the Scheldt; six or eight hundred took refuge in a farmhouse; but De Beauvoir's men set fire to the building, and every rebel who had entered it was burned alive or shot. No quarter was given; and hardly a man of the three thousand who had held the fort escaped. The body of Thoulouse, their leader, was cut into a hundred pieces."

Such is the account given by the chronicler; and it presents to us a dark and gloomy picture of the times of which it tells. Persecution had driven even wise and good men mad, inciting them to take unhallowed means for deliverance from the intolerable yoke laid upon them. They appealed to the

sword; and, in numberless instances, they perished by the sword. Worse than this was it that in thus striving to regain the liberties of which they had been deprived, or those which are every man's birthright, they often acted as though they believed that the end justified the means. It would have been sad enough had those who fell laid down their lives for the gospel, and been prepared to render up their account; but the greater number of them were not prepared; and there can be no doubt that a variety of inferior motives had led them to provoke the cruel vengeance from which they suffered.

In blaming the leaders of this insurrection, however, it should be borne in mind that treachery and falsehood of the darkest dye had been combined with persecution against the Reformed Church; that peaceable means had been sought for redress, and sought in vain; and that the spirit of the times led men to appeal to force with fiery impatience. And although this premature and ill-considered resistance to despotic tyranny failed, and brought destruction upon those who thus used the carnal weapons of warfare, it doubtless resulted in infusing into the minds of the persecuted people a stronger attachment to the gospel on behalf of which they suffered, and eventually assisted in bringing about the overthrow of that superstition which had laid its heavy yoke on all the faithful of the land. Meanwhile we may be sure that He who sitteth in the heavens was holding in derision the wretched tools of a foreign persecutor, was preparing to speak unto them in His wrath, and to vex them with His sore displeasure; and well knew when and how to make the wrath of man to praise Him, while the remainder of it He restrained. This, however, was yet in the future; and awaiting the events which brought about the emancipation of the Protestant Church in that country, we have yet to trace the immediate consequences of the fight and flight of Ostrawell.



CHAPTER XXIII.

Antwerp in March, 1567. Historical.

THE perturbation of Nina Franck, as shown by the closing paragraph in her journal, was not without sufficient cause. The drama just depicted "had been enacted in full sight of Antwerp. The fight had lasted from day-break till ten o'clock in the forenoon, during the whole of which period the city ramparts, looking towards Ostrawell, the roofs of houses, the towers of churches, had been swarming with eager spectators. The sound of drum and trumpet, the rattle of musketry, the shouts of victory, the despairing cries of the vanquished, were heard by thousands who deeply sympathised with the rebels thus enduring so sanguinary a chastisement. In Antwerp there were forty thousand people opposed to the Church of Rome. Of this number the greater proportion were Calvinists, and of these Calvinists there were thousands looking down from the battlements upon the disastrous fight."

The excitement soon became uncontrollable. According to the historian Motley, to whose graphic narrative we are much

indebted,—vast numbers "came pouring towards the Red Gate; which afforded the readiest egress to the scene of action." They came from every street and alley of the city. Some were armed with lance, pike, or arquebus; some bore sledge-hammers; others had the partisans, battle-axes, and huge two-handed swords of the previous century; all were determined upon issuing forth to the rescue of their friends in the fields outside the town. The wife of Thoulouse, not yet aware of her husband's death, although his defeat was obvious, flew from street to street, calling upon the Calvinists to save or to avenge their perishing brethren.

"A terrible tumult prevailed. Ten thousand men were already up and in arms. It was then that the Prince of Orange, who was sometimes described by his enemies as timid and pusillanimous by nature," showed the true spirit of a Christian hero. "His sense of duty no longer bade him defend the crown of Philip—which thenceforth was to be intrusted to the hirelings of the Inquisition;—but the vast population of Antwerp, the women and children, and the enormous wealth of the richest city in the world, had been confided to his care, and he had accepted the responsibility. Mounting his horse, he made his appearance instantly at the Red Gate, before as formidable a mob as man had ever faced. He came there almost alone, without guards, and was received with howls of execration. A thousand hoarse voices called him the pope's servant, minister of antichrist, and lavished upon him many more epithets of the same nature. His life was in imminent danger. A furious clothier levelled an arquebus full at his breast; but the loaded weapon was struck away by another hand in the crowd, while the prince, nothing daunted by the ferocious demonstrations against his life, nor enraged by the virulent abuse to which he was subjected, continued tranquilly, earnestly, imperatively, to address the crowd. . . . After he

had gained the ear of the multitude, the prince urged that the battle was now over, that the Reformers were entirely dispersed, the enemy retiring, and that a disorderly and ill-armed mob would be unable to retrieve the fortunes of the day. Many were thus persuaded to abandon the design. Five hundred of the most violent, however, insisted upon leaving the gates; and the governor, distinctly warning these zealots that their blood must be upon their own heads, reluctantly permitted that number to issue from the city. The rest, not appeased, but uncertain, and disposed to take vengeance upon the Catholics within the walls for the disaster which had occurred without, thronged tumultuously to the long wied street, called the Mere, situate in the very heart of the city.

"Meantime, the ardour of those who had sallied from the gate grew sensibly cooler, when they found themselves in the open fields. De Beauvoir, whose men, after the victory, had scattered in pursuit of the fugitives, now heard the tumult in the city. Suspecting an attack, he rallied his compact little army again for a fresh encounter." And now was enacted one of those scenes of sickening cruelty which too often attend active warfare, and are sometimes spoken of as being unfortunately necessary. There were three hundred of the unhappy followers of Thoulouse—the remnant of the gathering at Ostrawell—who had been taken captive and spared for ransom, thinking themselves happy in having escaped the morning slaughter. But on the fresh alarm given by the tumult in the city, and the appearance of the band of five hundred now issuing from the gate, the victorious general commanded that all the captives should be killed. The order was too consonant with the savage nature of his soldiery, and the principles of persecution with which habit had rendered them familiar, to be disputed, or for the execution of it to be for a moment delayed. Volley after volley of bullets was

poured in upon the miserable prisoners until their shrieks and groans were hushed for ever in death. Then the perpetrators of this outrage marched towards Antwerp, with drums beating and colours flying in triumph, driving before them the small band of armed citizens who had ventured beyond the walls, but whose courage now forsook them, and whom prudence loudly called to make good their retreat. Their pursuer followed them to the city moat, on the margin of which he planted, in bitter scorn, the banners of the unhappy Marnix of Thoulouse, and sounded a trumpet tone of defiance; but finding that the citizens were not disposed to respond to the challenge, and having no warrant to attack the city, he removed his trophies and departed.

"On the other hand," writes Mr. Motley, "the tumult within the walls had again increased. The Calvinists had been collecting in great numbers upon the Mere. This large and splendid thoroughfare communicated by various cross streets with the Exchange, and with many other public edifices. By an early hour in the afternoon twelve or fifteen thousand armed and fighting men had assembled upon the place. They had barricaded the whole precinct with paving-stones and upturned wagons. They had already broken into the arsenal, and obtained many field-pieces, which were planted at the entrance of every street and by-way. They had stormed the city jail, and liberated the prisoners, all of whom, grateful and ferocious, came to swell the numbers who defended the stronghold on the Mere. . . . The alarm throughout the city was indescribable. The cries of women and children, as they remained in trembling expectation of what the next hour might bring forth, were (said one who heard them) enough to soften the hardest hearts.

"Nevertheless, the diligence and courage of the Prince of Orange kept pace with the insurrection. He had caused the

eight companies of guards enrolled in September to be mustered upon the square in front of the city hall, for the protection of that building and of the magistracy. He had summoned the senate of the city, the board of ancients, the deans of guilds, the ward masters, to consult with him at the council-board. At the peril of his life he had again gone before the angry mob in the Mere, advancing against their cannon and their outcries, and compelling them to appoint eight deputies to treat with him and the magistrates at the town hall. This done, he had, quickly but deliberately, drawn up six articles to which those deputies gave their assent, and in which the city government cordially united. These articles provided that the keys of the city should remain in the possession of the prince, that the watch should be held by burghers and soldiers together, that the magistrates should permit the entrance of no garrison, and that the citizens should be entrusted with the care of the city charters."

This arrangement, however, failed to give satisfaction. Antwerp was, in fact, in the condition of "a house divided against itself." The Calvinists, who, to the number of fifteen thousand, were encamped on the Mere, fearing treachery on the part of their brethren, the Lutherans, demanded possession of the keys of the city. "They did not choose," they said, "to be locked up at the mercy of any man;" and they threatened to demolish the city hall unless the keys were delivered into their hands. They also claimed that burghers, without distinction of religion, instead of mercenary troops, should be allowed to guard the market-place in front of the town hall.

"It was now nightfall, and no definite arrangements had been concluded. Nevertheless, a temporary truce was made, by means of a concession as to the guard. It was agreed that the burghers, Calvinists and Lutherans, as well as

Catholics, should be employed to protect the city. By subtlety, however, the Calvinists detailed for that service were posted, not in the town house square, but on the ramparts and at the gates."

Having thus far, for the sake of necessary connection and clearness, followed the chronicler, we turn to the personal narrative embodied in Nina Franck's journal from the point to which this history has brought us.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Further Extracts from Nina's Journal.

MARCH the 14th.—We are yet safe. It is of the Lord's mercies. Let this be my Scripture portion for to-day:—"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed."

It was late last evening when my dear father hastily returned from the council-chamber, to which he had been called; and with him was the young lawyer of Leyden, who has been prevented by these tumults from returning to his home. With them was the once monk, who some time past was brought to us by pastor Junius, and who, as we afterwards heard, bore himself so bravely at the Augustine monastery. The poor man was yet in his monk's habit, and was ghastly pale and faint, both from loss of blood and want of sustenance, as I afterwards learned.

"I must again away," said my dear father, hurriedly, to Aunt Philippa; "but this young gentleman has undertaken your defence, as far as human protection can avail."

Aunt Philippa made a low obeisance; but she looked

angrily, methought; and after a moment's space she asked if the elderly person in the white cowl was also to be added to the number of our slender garrison.

"I commend Guy Regis to your careful nurture," said my father, in that quiet manner which he has when he is determined to be obeyed; and Aunt Philippa making no reply, my father, in few words, informed us that the Protestant preacher, as he now is, in spite of his frock and cowl, was among those who had been taken prisoner, after having been wounded in the late battle of Ostrawell; but that he had escaped from the hands of his captors, partly owing to his monkish garments, and had found his way into the city. My dear father then tenderly embraced us all, and speedily took his departure, having to share in the fatigue and danger of the night watch.

There was little sleep for any of us, for who could retire to rest with the dreadful expectation that any moment might bring upon us an attack from one or other of the furious bands of armed men whom persecution has so driven mad that even those who are brothers in one common faith, excepting some slight differences in relation to man-made creeds, were, and even now are, ready to destroy each other's lives!

We were all gathered together in our dining-hall,—the house being barricaded as strongly as could be,—and our first care was for the poor wounded and fainting preacher, who had sunk on to a couch, and seemed insensible of his condition. I am glad to write down here, that Aunt Philippa compassionated the poor man, and, notwithstanding all our terrors, busied herself in helping to bind up his wound, which had been left untended, and in providing him with some immediate sustenance. Then he was led to an inner chamber, and placed upon a bed.

The young gentleman whom dear father had left as a guard did excellent service in keeping up our poor failing courage. From time to time he went the round of the house with the two men-servants, examining the defences, and then returned to us, reporting that all was safe. It seemed hard to believe this; for the air resounded with the trampling of feet as the armed bands marched to and fro; the hoarse cries of hundreds of voices, as in fierce contention, and such watchwords as "Down with the Papists!" "Long live the Beggars!" It was dreadful to hear all this; but, by God's mercy, no outbreak was permitted to happen; and, soon after dawn of day, our father returned with the news that, thus far, all was well, and desired us to seek some rest in sleep,—after first compelling us to take a meal, for which truly we had but little appetite. But he himself set us the example; and would have remained longer with us but that his presence was even then required in the council-chamber.

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It is now three hours past noon, and our dear father is still absent. Shut up as we are, we know little of what has been done to-day, or what may even now be taking place. We hear only a confused tumult without, like the noise of rushing water when a dam is broken down. And this again reminds me of that sweet assurance given to us in one of David's psalms—"The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters; yea, than the mighty waves of the sea."

Our guest, the young burgher of Leyden, went out two hours since, to bring to us intelligence of what is going forward in the city, and has not yet come back. He seems to be a godly youth, and full of high courage. I pray our dear Lord to have him in safe keeping!

Our other guest, the escaped preacher, having been re-

freshed by sleep and food, though still exceedingly weak, has risen from his couch and been among us, speaking to us, and encouraging us to put our trust in God, and to hold fast our love to the holy gospel. His zeal is not over-pleasing to Aunt Philippa, who left the room when he proposed to us to kneel down in prayer, which we did, Ursel counting her beads the while, to put out of her head the heretic words he uttered, as she just now told me. Alas! surely that is come upon us which is spoken of in the gospel, when households are divided within themselves. Poor Ursel has more faith, I fear, in dead saints, than in the living God.

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I had written so far when Master Paul Merula returned. He has little to say to encourage us, save that our dear father is safe, and in council together with the other deputies and the guild officers, who, with our good prince, are busy in framing a new treaty of peace. But there are grave doubts whether this will be accepted by those who are now up in arms. He tells us that the strange enmity which has latterly sprung up between the Calvinists and Lutherans is as fierce as that between those two great branches of the Reformed religion and the Catholics: and that the Calvinists—those encamped on the Mere—fiercely and loudly express their determination to have their own way. They threaten to plunder the monasteries, and the houses of all the wealthy Catholics, and to drive every Papist out of the town; and they are summoning the Lutherans to join them, on peril of their sharing the same fate.

"This is all very shocking," I said, when the young gentleman had given us this information.

"What better is to be expected, when people forsake the true religion?" demanded Aunt Philippa.

"Is it not rather that persecution has made even wise men mad?" said the young lawyer, gently. "But indeed," he added, "although these threats proceed from their camp, it is well known that the Calvinists have been largely reinforced not only by numbers of the Gueux, but by all sorts of malefactors and robbers, whose only object is rapine, and who coerce the more moderate and religious to do as they will. Thus the sacred name of religion is profaned: and the cause of free liberty of conscience is defiled."

I was glad to hear the young advocate speak thus boldly. And I am sure that my dear father—Calvinist though he be—would be among the first to condemn these mad doings. I would he were with us now!

My father is even now returned, released for a few hours from his duties. He has had no sleep for forty hours—dear father!—and for many nights before that his repose was so broken by anxious alarms that he sadly needs rest. It seems, therefore, quite providential that we have a substitute for him in the young gentleman from Leyden, who has undertaken the charge of our little garrison through the coming night. Nay, but let me remember that "except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it; and except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

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March the 18th.—It is four days since the last line in my journal was written; and now let me take for my text to-day these words:—"If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quick, when they were so wrathfully displeased at us. Yea, the waters had drowned us, and the stream had gone over our soul. The deep waters of the proud had gone even

over our soul. But praised be the Lord, who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth."

It was on the evening of the fourteenth that my dear father returned exhausted from his labours and dangers in the town; he slept very soundly until morning; and we passed through the night without further alarm, only that the confusion in the street seemed even greater than on the night before. We learned afterwards that this was caused by the gathering together of the Lutherans, who, to the number of three or four thousand, had taken arms in the middle of the night, and marched to the river-side, near St. Michael's Cloister, where they encamped. With them also were numbers of Catholics, who were willing, at a time of common danger, to unite with those whom, at other times, they despised and persecuted. This was brought about (so my father says) by the skill and judgment of the prince, our burgrave, who also sent for the deans of all the foreign guilds in Antwerp,—English, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and others,—engaging their assistance for the protection of the city, commanding them to remain in their armour at their several factories, ready to be out at a moment's warning. My father says but for these wise precautions, he thinks the city would have been given over to the fury of those who would have shown no mercy to any, and who, under pretence of religion, were ready at that time for the most murderous deeds. Praised be the Lord, who hath not given us over as a prey to their teeth! Verily our soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler!

My father also reports that the courage and forethought, and also the temper of the noble prince has, throughout these troubles, been above all praise. It seems, indeed, as though the Lord had raised him up as an instrument for the preservation of the lives of thousands within this city, who otherwise would have been doomed to destruction.

It was early on the morning of the fifteenth, that my father and his young guest left the house, leaving to our care the preacher, Guy Regis, who is still weak from the effect of his wounds. It seems strange to see how much attention Aunt Philippa pays to this poor man; and yet how strongly she dislikes him because of his heresy, as she calls his religion. She wishes that he had never come near us; and yet she will always be in his company, and will permit no one to attend him but herself. I think she is drawn towards him to hear his words, and that then she despises herself for having listened to what she would call his pestilent doctrines.

Late in the day, our dear father and our Leyden guest returned. The first words we heard from them were, "Antwerp is saved!" And then dear father called all his household together to give thanks to God for the great mercy shown to the city.

I will write down the particulars of that day, as I have heard them from my father and Paul, as I have learnt to call the young lawyer.

They say that on the morning of that day, when they went out, the city presented a sad and fearful sight. Counting-houses and shops were all closed in every street, and only armed men were to be seen hurrying to and fro. There were three armies encamped at different points within the city walls;—the Calvinists on the Mere; the Lutherans at St. Michael's, and the Catholics, with the regular city guard, on the great square. These three parties numbered in all nearly forty thousand men, all eager to rush upon each other, and only restrained by the firmness and courage and wisdom of Prince William, who knew what would be the consequences of a battle pent up within the city walls, and foresaw that, if one blow was stricken, desolation would be brought to every hearth and home.

So forcibly did the good princely burgrave represent this danger to the leaders of the Lutheran party, that they—being among the more wealthy of the citizens—readily agreed with him, and early in the morning the troops, both Lutheran and Catholic, were called together to hear read the articles of peace which had been prepared the day before. It seemed, said my father, as though God had, in His mercy, prepared their hearts to receive these proposals with favour; for no sooner were they read than hearty shouts of approbation rent the air, at the hearing of which the prince gave God thanks. But still the Calvinist party, and those who had joined themselves to it,—being the released prisoners from the city gaols, and all kinds of malefactors and outlaws, such as abound in all large cities,—these, numbering altogether some fifteen thousand fighting men, had yet to be dealt with; and many doubted whether they would accede to the articles of peace. Nevertheless, the prince, attended by the heads of the guilds, and about a hundred mounted troopers, all wearing red scarves over their armour, rode boldly into the camp on the Mere, and caused the articles to be read in the hearing of the fierce and disorderly mob, whose threatening looks and gestures and words gave little promise of success. The courage of the noble prince, however, did not fail him; and after the reading of the articles, he addressed the people with a loud voice, warning them that a struggle on their part would be hopeless, and pointing out that the arrangements just offered to them gave to all religious parties the right of worship according to the dictates of their consciences, also that a foreign garrison was not to be admitted into Antwerp, and that all else that could reasonably be expected or hoped for from force was already engaged to them.

These arguments, said my father, who was there, seemed to have weight with the more reasonable of the insurgents; and

the prince finished his address by asking all present to testify their acceptance of the terms he offered, by repeating after him the words he was about to utter. These words were: "Long live the king!" And it was a noble thing, my father says, that he who had been so persecuted and otherwise ill treated by the king whom he had so faithfully served, and by the whole court, should still expose his life to danger, for his ungrateful master, and thus show the loyalty which dwelt in his heart.

It may be that others thought so too; for, as my father tells us, the utterance of these words had a wonderful effect on the crowd of Calvinists and others, who, after one moment's hesitation, followed his example, and raised a loud and joyful shout, as with one voice, crying, "Long live the king!"

Then they threw down their arms, and all the citizens, of whatever religion, embraced each other. Then, after the articles of peace had been signed by all the leaders of the several armies, the people restored their arms to the arsenals, and quietly dispersed: and it has been ascertained that although more than forty thousand armed men had, for three days, had the city at their mercy, yet that not a single person was, during all that time, injured either in body or estate; and now all the city is peaceable and quiet. Surely this is the Lord's doing!

CHAPTER XXV.

Under the Linden Tree.

N a bright and balmy spring afternoon, a month or more after the quieting of Antwerp, Nina Franck was resting on her favourite bench under a linden tree, on the terrace of her father's garden. She was not alone, for old Ursel, as of yore, was still in attendance on the weakly girl, and had taken her seat a few paces off, ready to wait upon her nursling when needful, and meantime employing herself in the preparation of a coif for her own wearing. Ursel was in good spirits; for only that day the old stork and his mate had returned from their annual migration, and had taken possession of their home amidst the gables of the family mansion.

Ursel, however, was not the only sharer of Nina's quiet retreat. Seated still nearer to her was the young advocate from Leyden, Paul Merula, whose business still detained him in Antwerp, and who was ever a welcome guest at the burgher's hospitable house. He had that day transacted his affairs in the law courts earlier than usual, and had taken his way to his friend's house, where, finding that all the family

excepting Aunt Philippa and Nina were abroad, he had adventured himself into the pleasant, though formal, Dutch garden, to have a chat with the contented little invalid. For next to Margaret Franck, the young gentleman liked to be in the company of her gentle-minded invalid younger sister; while he rather avoided than courted a tête-à-tête with the high-tempered though courtly dame, whose feelings were so strong against all who had embraced the Reformed religion.

Some changes had taken place since we last left Paul Merula in the society of his Antwerp friends as one of their guards. The distractions of the city had for a time ceased, and many of those who had been in arms against each other in their mistaken zeal had seen this folly, and had become friends again. Some license of free worship had been once more given both to the Calvinists and the Lutherans; and the Catholics, who were greatly outnumbered in Antwerp by those of the two branches of the Protestant faith, were only too happy at having escaped, with the skin of their teeth, as it were, from the exasperated vengeance of their persecuted fellow-citizens. Nevertheless it was feared by many that this season of repose would be of but short continuance; for it was very well known that the Regent had strongly disapproved of the articles of peace by which the wise and moderate burgrave had saved Antwerp from destruction, and that the breach between herself and the Prince of Orange was wider than ever. Also, past experience had taught the people that the most binding obligations might be set at nought without scruple, if they stood in the way of the violent and persecuting rulers of the unhappy land. No wonder, therefore, that the joy of Antwerp was moderated by reasonable doubts and fears.

The household of Floris Franck had lost its wounded guest, Guy Regis, who even before his strength had fully returned

NINA HEARS SOME STORIES OF THE MARTYRS.

expressed his anxious desire to be about his Lord's work, to which he had been called.

"My time is but short," he said, in answer to the remonstrances of his host, "and the night draweth on in which no man can work. Let me therefore, like my beloved Master, work while it is day, even in season and out of season. Long, long did I, in ignorance and blindness and pride, set myself against Him, when I thought I was doing Him service; and I must now, as much as in me lies, and God helping me, preach the faith which once I would have destroyed."

So he was allowed to go, after being well provided for by his generous host; but whither he was gone was not known at that time.

Nor had his sojourn under the roof of Floris Franck been without some advantage to the cause he had so much at heart; for the burning zeal which consumed, as it were, the oil of his mortal life, or exhausted its springs, had manifested itself in efforts for the spiritual welfare of all within its reach. Under his searching words Agnes had seemed to forget those worldly fashions and distinctions to which, in spite of her better principles, she had previously clung with a too fond reluctance to let them go; and Margaret's spirit of contradiction and argument had been tamed down to a soft and generous compassion for those on whom the true gospel light of the Reformation had not yet shined. These changes gave great contentment to their father, who desired rather that his daughters should exhibit in their lives the meekness of wisdom than the skilfulness of disputation.

Nor did the benefits of the gospel preacher's exhortations end here; for both Nina's and her father's faith had been strengthened by witnessing the fervour of his zeal, as well as by the ease with which he had torn to pieces the webs of sophistry woven by the Romish Church, from which, indeed,

they had escaped, but which yet sometimes confused their minds. Moreover, the copy of the Holy Scriptures which the burgher so sedulously concealed, and had been only at times brought forward for the edification of his family, and then with much natural fear lest their possession of such a treasure should become known, and bring grief to them,—these Scriptures had been by Guy Regis daily studied, and read aloud and boldly to the assembled household.

The strangest effect, however, which accompanied the short residence of the ex-monk in the family of the merchant was that produced on the matron who presided over its domestic affairs. It seemed, indeed, as though Aunt Philippa were actuated by two conflicting sets of feeling, one of strong and bitter repugnance against the doctrines which he promulgated, and the other of some secret attraction towards them. So have we sometimes seen how a needle imbued with the mysterious influence of one pole of a magnet, will be driven away if approached by the opposite pole, and yet, when steadily pursued, will at length be drawn towards it, and fix itself upon it, as it were contrary to its own will. It was even thus with Mistress Philippa, and none could tell whether she were glad or sorry when Guy Regis tucked up his frock and girded himself for his departure.

From this needful digression and these explanations we return to the little group on the terrace, where the young advocate was rehearsing to the patient and deeply interested girl many of the brave and courageous acts of their fellow-countrymen and women who had borne their testimony to the faith of Christ, and had suffered cruel martyrdom rather than deny their Lord and Master. Among other histories, he gave the following account of an escape from the very jaws and fangs of persecution:

"There dwelt in Valenciennes," said he, "two godly minis-

ters of the gospel, who had made themselves hateful to the persecuting Cardinal[1] by their faithfulness, and what he called their heresies, so he determined on their destruction. Their names were Faveau and Mallert. They were not deeply learned; but they were warm-hearted followers of the Lord, and much comforted their little flocks by reading the Scriptures and exhortation. And this, in our unhappy land, is condemnation enough.

"Nevertheless, other causes of accusation were invented. They were accused of pretending to cast out devils, and to work other miracles; and on these charges they were first apprehended and cast into prison, though it was well known that their only offence was that of reading the Bible. This was enough, and the two good men were condemned to the flames.

"The magistrates, however, were afraid to carry out the sentence, on account of the popularity of the two ministers; and it was not until peremptory orders reached them from the Cardinal to proceed forthwith with the execution that they felt themselves compelled to obey."

"I would never have obeyed," said Nina, indignantly.

"I do not think you would," replied Paul, smiling; "but the magistrates were men-pleasers, desiring to stand well with both parties, but fearing to offend the more powerful. So, after an imprisonment of six months, the preachers were told that they must prepare for death. On the following day they were taken from prison, and conveyed to the market-place, where preparations had already been made for their burning.

"But these same preparations had warned the people of Valenciennes of what was to take place, and gave them time to form their plans. Thus, when these two good men had arrived at the place of execution, and the executioner was

[1] Granvelle.

binding one of them to the stake, a woman in the crowd took off her shoe and threw it on the funeral pile."

"Methinks the shoe must have been an old one, or the vrouw was but an unthrifty housewife; for what help could even an old shoe give to the burning?" said Ursel, whose familiarity with her young mistress gave her license to interpose a remark, and who was shocked at the waste of so indispensable an article of clothing.

"Nay, you do not understand," said the young lawyer. "The shoe was not to help the burning, but to hinder it. It was a signal which had before been agreed upon; and no sooner was the shoe seen hurtling through the air than a sudden movement took place in the crowd. Men in great numbers dashed upon the barriers which had been erected around the place of execution. Some seized the fagots, which had been already lighted, and scattered them in every direction; some tore up the pavements; others broke in pieces the barriers. Never before, surely, did a shoe, either new or old, produce such a commotion."

"Did the poor doomed men escape?" asked Nina, with much emotion.

"The execution was of necessity delayed," continued the narrator; "but the guard so far kept off their assailants, that they carried away the two ministers, and placed them in the prison again, so that it seemed but a respite of their sentence. But the people were not to be baulked thus of their success. Evening came, and then a vast throng, chanting one of the psalms of David, advanced steadily to the prison. In one short hour the gates were forced, and the prisoners were rescued, and conveyed in safety from their persecutors."

"I am glad of it, with all my heart," said the excited listener. "Did this happen long since?"

"About five years ago; and even now the day of the year

in which these events took place is called in Valenciennes 'the day of the unburned.'"

"I would there were other such days to be celebrated," said Nina.

"If you are not tired," said the young advocate, "I can give you a story of another escape yet more strange." And receiving an assent to his proposal, he went on.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Story of Angelus Merula.

"IN the last century," said the young lawyer, "my great-uncle Angelus was born at Brill. Had he lived to the present time, he would have been over fourscore years old. My father knew him well, and received much kindness from his hands.

"When a young man he studied for the priesthood in the Catholic Church, and took the degree of Master of Arts. Afterwards he was presented to the benefice of Henfleet. I know not what up to this time his character had been, save that he gained his promotion by what were called his good manners and his great learning. But his great learning did not much for his enlightenment until he was in the later years of his life led to a diligent study of the Holy Scriptures; and then, as I have heard, he began to see more and more with how many spots and errors the Church of Rome had been defiled and corrupted. To his surprise he then discovered that there was, as he could find, no foundation for the so-called sacrifice of the mass, for the worship of the

Virgin Mary, for invocation to departed saints, and for many other innovations which had crept into the Christian Church, whereby it was made anti-Christian. These things dwelt long upon his mind in silence, until his heart burned within him with indignation against the errors in which he had been brought up. It was not, however, till he was near seventy years of age that he made known the thoughts which afflicted him; and then, being no longer able to keep silence and do violence to his conscience, he made some alteration in the service of his Church,—in that part of it especially which touched upon the merits and mediation of the saints,—so that, instead of praying to be heard through those manifold intercessors, as the mass-book directs, he accustomed himself to implore the mercy of God through the intercession of Christ alone, who is the glory of all saints.

"Proceeding in this manner," continued Nina's companion, "my relative now and then suggested to his hearers, and especially to his very good friend and patron who had presented him to the benefice, several other doctrines opposed to popery. Sometimes he ventured to do this from his pulpit, but oftener in private conversation. He also moved his patron to reform several matters relating to his vicarage, over which he had power,—such as forbidding any further oblations to be made to certain images in the church at Henfleet, as well as divers superstitious processions in their honour.

"As may be imagined, this course was not permitted a long continuance; and being accused by some zealous papists who had heard of his proceedings, the venerable Reformer was cited to appear before one of the spiritual courts, where an inquiry was made into the changes he had introduced in the services of the mass-book. These being acknowledged by him, an inquisitor was sent to Henfleet, who having searched into his books and writings, drew up a number of articles

against the aged man. Nevertheless my uncle so well defended himself, that nothing of importance could be found against him,—he still being in the privileged order of the Romish priesthood, though disapproving of the corruptions of the Romish Church.

"Then said the inquisitor, 'I must have the written notes of your sermons,'—which had not yet been given up or inquired for. Some of my good uncle's friends would have persuaded him to refuse this demand, as being beyond the inquisitor's warrant; but his own conscience, which acquitted him of preaching aught contrary to the Scriptures, exhorted him not to conceal or withhold these sermon notes. 'For,' said he, 'why should I dissemble or cloke the things I have preached to my people? That which I was not ashamed to preach, I will not be afraid of openly confessing;' and thereupon he delivered up his sermons.

"His condemnation was now assured; for in those sermons were words such as these:

"'That nothing is necessary to be believed which cannot be found in the Word of God.'

"'That faith without love is no true and living faith.'

"'That all things needful for salvation are fully taught in the Holy Scriptures.'

"'That the hymn to the Virgin Mary, styling her the Queen of Heaven, is rank blasphemy against God and Christ.'

"'That no synods or councils of men, though the whole world concurred therein, ought by their decrees to draw men away from the promises and commands of God.'

"These," said the young gentleman, "were the grave sins committed by my poor old uncle against the Church."

"And yet they are all true matters," said Nina.

"Ay, but the nearer the truth, the greater the crime, in these days," said he.

"The more the pity; but I fear me it is so," added the young maiden, with a sigh. "But I interrupt your story, sir. You hinted at a strange and wonderful escape from persecution."

"Which I will now proceed to relate," rejoined Master Paul; "and I will omit much that occurred in the next four years, during which time my venerable relative was haled from prison to prison; also the various further examinations undergone by him; as well as the threatenings and blandishments alternately employed by his accusers and judges to induce him to recant what they called his heresies. Neither will I say anything particularly of the efforts made to obtain his release by some few influential friends who wished him well, and secretly adhered to the doctrines he had taught,—further than to say that those efforts availed nothing. I must tell, however, of a wicked stratagem which was played upon him by his persecutors, who, being alarmed by the demonstrations made against them by the people, as the time drew nigh when he was to receive sentence of death, determined, if they could, to cheat him into a recantation of what they called his errors. The truth being that they feared for their own lives,—so dear was he to the commons, who cried out that, in losing the aged gentleman, they were bereft of their father, their patron, their defender, and their comfort in times of trial. For my great-uncle had a large estate, which he had always been ready to expend to the benefit of the poor, and, among other deeds, had built a hospital for their relief. So this was the trick they played him:

"They brought my uncle—who, besides being old, was also very deaf—from his vile prison to the court, where sentence was expected to be pronounced; but, instead of this, they gathered round him, and one in the especial, a bishop, knelt down before the prisoner and made a long speech, in which

he praised the aged man's learning and piety, and declared that there was no difference of opinion between him and his judges, who indeed were his 'truest' friends—only that there were a few slight matters relating to mere trifles of no import; and all they wished him to do for his release was to acknowledge (as a mere matter of form) that he had somewhat unseasonably endeavoured to abolish a few customs, which, indeed, were of no importance as matters of faith and doctrine; that thereby he had given offence where no offence was intended, for which he would now express his sorrow. 'Do this,' said the kneeling and suppliant bishop, 'and you shall live; and we will pawn our souls to the great Judge of the earth that your conscience shall be free from blame or sin.'

"These words being pronounced with much show of humility and kindness, and accompanied with shedding of tears, so wrought upon the deceived old man that, after a brief space he consented to say publicly as they had said, namely, that he was sorry he had given offence in things indifferent. So they led him to the scaffold, about which stood great numbers of people, who had been drawn together to witness the execution; and there was read—not that which he had agreed to say, but an abjuration of all the so-called heresies of which he had been guilty, an acknowledgment of grievous error in having preached the same, and a desire to be reconciled to the Church, which he had so evilly offended.

"Now, I have told you that my dear uncle was exceedingly deaf. This his persecutors knew; and they took care that this false confession should be read in so low a tone, and so rapidly, that he himself should not hear it, though they took care that the people around were made acquainted with every particular. So, after the reading, he was asked in a loud voice, whether he agreed with what had been read; and he, not suspecting the trick which had been played upon him, answered,

'Yes'—meaning no more than that he disclaimed having intended to give offence concerning those trifling and indifferent matters which he had been desired to revoke. Nevertheless, before he signed the paper, he desired to read it for himself; but the inquisitors said there was no time then; but they must make haste and quit the place, because of the clamours of the people, and because there was more to be done. So the helpless and bewildered old man took pen in hand, and signed his name, and then was hurried away.

"And it was a true saying, that about the clamours of the people; for no sooner had they learned what their former friend had so ignorantly done, than their love and compassion turned to hatred, anger, and curses. The poor prisoner (for he was a prisoner still) bore the scandal, and his friends the shame, of this deed of deceit."

"Yet methinks," said Nina, hesitatingly and blushingly, when the young advocate came to a pause here, "although this might be an escape from martyrdom, it was not a happy one."

"Nay, but my story ends not here," said the young gentleman; "and the escape of which I spoke is yet to be told."

"Having hurried my poor uncle back to prison, his judges then passed sentence upon him, that though, by his recantation, his life was saved, he was thereafter to be perpetually imprisoned, to do penance for his sins. And then, too, was made known to him how great a deceit had been put upon him.

"It would take long," continued the narrator, "to tell of all that followed after this; how my uncle wrote a full confutation of the confession he had been tricked into signing; how he was sent from one prison to another, and shut up in a monastery (the worst of all his prisons), where he was confined in a dungeon along with two men who had been bereft of their senses; how, after that, he was again taken

before the inquisitors, where he openly declared that his recantation was a deceit put upon him, and that he would stand by all he had ever before preached, said, or written.

"All this was afterwards known, as also how that, as a relapsed apostate, he was condemned to the fire.

"And now I come to the strange deliverance of the aged martyr, after five long, long years of bitter persecutions and horrible sufferings which he had been made to endure.

"The last prison of which he had experience was at Mons, where, for six weeks, he was confined in the dungeon of the castle, amidst filth and vermin, and with so scanty a supply of food and drink to keep life within him, that when brought out for execution he was so shrunken and feeble that he had need to be supported.

"As he was thus being led, a slight interruption took place; for my father at that moment appeared, having only the day before learned where his uncle was imprisoned, so secret had been the proceedings of the Inquisition; and on making the discovery he had hastened with all speed to Mons, to use, if they could be made available, some last efforts to save the old, worn-out servant of God."

"Now the saints be praised!" exclaimed old Ursel, who had listened, with strong emotions, to the story. "I am glad your father, sir, arrived just in time to save the poor old man."

"Nay, he did not thus escape," said the young gentleman; "he was too late. The sentence had been passed, and the faggots were prepared, and the torches were lit. It needs must be that the heretic should die; and all my father could do was to receive his last instructions and embraces, and to accompany him on this his last sad journey.

"And yet not sad to him, for he was helped to say as he went on, 'I thank my most gracious Father that I am ap-

pointed to die publicly, and that it is not in the power of my adversaries to blast the constancy with which I am armed through His grace;' and so he went forward to the stake, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus. Then presently he said to my father, 'Believe firmly that you shall soon see the salvation of the Lord in the land of the living; behave, therefore, with courage, and patiently wait the Lord's time.' And when those who were leading the aged martyr heard this, they forcibly separated him from my father. Nevertheless, their victim, going on as well as his weakness would permit, and supported on one side by a monk, and on the other by the hangman, who was to set fire to the faggots, did not cease all the time to exhort the people to the knowledge of the truth, and to the love and fear of God, together with a continual meditation upon the death and merits of their only Saviour, Jesus Christ, and not to depend on the merit of their own works. And he further declared that the cause of their putting him to death was his maintaining that our worship ought only to be addressed to God.

"And now comes the deliverance of which I spoke.

"Being come out of the town, to the pile that was prepared, into the midst of which the martyr was to be put, he begged of them that he might have leave to put up a prayer before being fastened to the stake. This being granted, he knelt down and bowed his head on the outside of the pile. Remaining in this position some little time, it began to be said that he was afraid of the approaching torments, and that therefore he remained so long on his knees. At length the executioner and others becoming impatient, they laid hands on him, and endeavoured to raise him, when, to their astonishment, they found that it was only a lifeless, unfeeling corpse they were handling. He himself was not, for God had taken him.

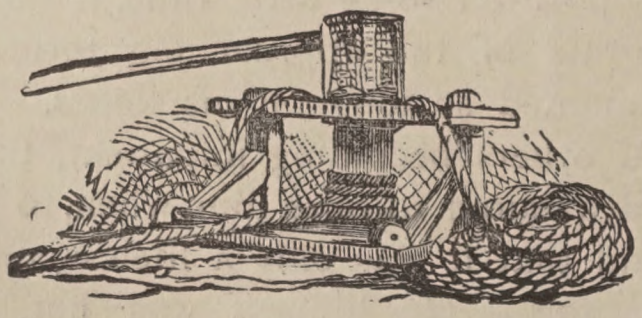
"This," added the narrator, "was the end of my dear uncle, Angelus Merula, in which the goodness and mercy of God most visibly appeared. For it seemed manifest that it was He and no other who had delivered His servant from the burning fiery trial, at a time when no other help was near, and yet had permitted and enabled him to bear testimony to the gospel at the very latest hour of his life."

"And yet did not this signal deliverance strike his persecutors with confusion and remorse?" asked Nina, when she found words to speak.

"Ah, no! only the public hangman, who was to have been the executioner. He refused to proceed with his loathsome task. 'For,' said he, 'the condemned man was already dead; and the law must needs be satisfied with that.' But if the law was satisfied, the inquisitors were not; for they afterwards insisted that the corpse of my dead uncle should be burned to ashes."

"Holy Virgin! What men there be in the world!" exclaimed Ursel, when the story was ended.

"'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them!'" gently whispered Nina, down whose cheeks the tears were softly trickling.



ON THE QUAY AT LEYDEN.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Partly Retrospective.

ONE summer's evening, two years after the occurrences at Antwerp recorded in the foregone chapters, two women might have been seen passing slowly along one of the principal streets of Leyden. They were strangers, apparently, for their steps were hesitating as well as slow; and, from time to time, they cast furtive glances around, as though uncertain what course to take. In attendance upon them, though following at the distance of a few paces, was a sailor whose only arm (for he was maimed) bore sundry packages, which might have indicated to a curious observer that the ladies had but just landed on one of the numerous quays or wharves of the river, and were seeking a resting-place in the city.

One of these strangers was elderly, as far as could be seen under the closely-fitting coif she wore; the other was young and timid. Apparently, too, she was weakly, for she leaned upon the arm of her older but stronger companion; and her footsteps were short and unequal. Her countenance, however

could not be critically examined; for she wore a veil of thick Flanders lace, closely drawn over her face. The rest of the costume of these two females was plain and simple,—in accordance with the custom of the day as followed by ladies when journeying.

There was much in the town of Leyden that would have attracted the notice and admiration of those who visited it for the first time; for this city, we are told, "was one of the most beautiful in the Netherlands. Placed in the midst of broad and fruitful pastures which had been reclaimed by the hand of industry from the bottom of the sea, it was fringed with smiling villages, blooming gardens, fruitful orchards. The ancient and, at last, decrepit Rhine, flowing languidly towards its sandy death-bed, had been multiplied into innumerable artificial currents, by which the city was completely interlaced. These watery streets were shaded by lime trees, poplars, and willows, and crossed by one hundred and forty-five bridges, mostly of hammered stone The houses were elegant; the squares and streets were spacious, airy, and clean; the churches and public edifices were imposing; while the whole aspect of the place suggested thrift, industry, and comfort."[1]

It was listlessly, however, that the two feeble wayfarers passed slowly on through the tree-shaded and canal-lined streets. If they raised their eyes, it was to cast fearful glances at the few strollers they encountered; for the times were such that in every person who crossed another's path might be suspected either a secret spy or an open foe. There had been times when, on a summer evening like this, the streets of Leyden would have been gay with pleasure-seekers. Under the shelter of the green foliage of the fine old trees, groups of citizens would have congregated to discuss peace-

[1] Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic.*

fully their social and domestic affairs, or otherwise to exchange friendly greetings. Dames and damsels, released for the time from their household duties, would have been, at that hour, taking their evening walks, the latter tempting to follow them at a respectful distance the young clerks whose desks were closed for that day, and whose ledgers had been an hour before restored to their shelves.

But now, in the dark year of 1569, fearfulness and trembling had taken the place of mirth and gladness; not alone in Leyden, but in every city and town and village and hamlet and lone dwelling throughout the unhappy land. To adopt the language of the mourning prophet concerning Damascus: —the inhabitants of the Netherlands were confounded; they had heard evil tidings; they were faint-hearted. There was sorrow on the sea; it could not be quiet. The land had waxed feeble, and had turned herself to flee. Fear had seized on her. Anguish and sorrows had taken her. Her young men had fallen in her streets; and the men of war had been cut off.

To be more explicit,—the two years which had transpired had been years of almost unmitigated distress to the bewildered and downtrodden Protestants (both Lutherans and Calvinists) of the Netherlands. Nor indeed had Catholics escaped the general miseries of the times. Let us briefly glance at a few, only a few, of the dark passages of that doleful history.

Coincident with the disturbances at Antwerp, or immediately following them, the city of Valenciennes had been taken by assault, and its inhabitants subjected to the most barbarous treatment from the victors; and during the two whole years which had passed heavily away, there had been scarcely a week in which several citizens were not executed, and often a great number were despatched at a time. To be

rich, or merely reputed wealthy, was enough. "It was a crime," writes the historian, "for which no goodness and innocence could atone." And what had happened to Valenciennes was but a type of that which was in store for any other city which might have the unhappiness to offend, or even excite the suspicion of the persecuting King of Spain, or his treacherous sister the Regent, or their merciless tool the Duke of Alva.

For he was now upon the scene,—a human tiger, knowing no sentiments of pity. During the past two years he had been ruling with a rod of iron, or a blood-stained sword, over the land, at the head of ten thousand of Spain's picked veterans. A tall, thin, erect man of sixty, with a small head, a long visage, lean yellow cheeks, dark twinkling eyes, a dusk complexion, black bristling hair, long sable-silvered beard, descending in two waving streams upon his breast—such is the description which has come down to us on the stream of time of the person of the Duke of Alva; and the world has agreed that such an amount of stealth and ferocity, of patient vindictiveness and universal bloodthirstiness, were never found in a savage beast of the forest, and but rarely in a human bosom. He had entered the Netherlands as a conqueror, not as a mediator. "I have tamed people of iron in my day," said he, on one occasion; "and shall I not easily crush these men of butter?" Such was the man whom, for a time, God permitted (for His own wise purposes) to be the scourge of the Netherlands. Can we wonder that mirth and song and joy had faded out of the land?

But is it true that among all the persecuted and oppressed there were none to rise against the persecutors and the oppressors? Where were the Gueux—the Beggars,—who had sworn that, though faithful to their king, they would give themselves no rest till their country's liberties were restored

and assured? Where were their leaders? Where was he—the noble prince—who, though having nothing to do with that confederacy, had shown himself so faithful, and courageous, and politic in his country's defence? Did he live, and could all hope be lost?

Many such questions were asked then throughout the length and breadth of the watery land: and these might have been the substance of the answers:—

The confederacy of the Beggars, if not broken up, had been, and at present was, powerless for help. No wonder at this, considering the diverse character of its component parts. It was felt by the best, and holiest, and wisest of the poor persecuted Protestants that it was like a going down to Egypt for help, when such godless men, as the majority of these Beggars were, were enlisted on the side of religion; and when such unhallowed means as were adopted were chosen for the deliverance of God's people. The confederacy, however, was not wholly extinct, though now but little was heard of it.

Where were its leaders? Ask Brussels what it witnessed on the 5th of June, 1568, when Count Egmont, as had been foretold to him by his faithful friend the Prince of Orange, expiated on the scaffold the fault of being a renegade to the people whom he had sworn to defend, for the sake of serving the tyrant who used him for his own purposes, and then pronounced his doom. With him perished Count Horn, another warning example left us on the pages of history of the truth, "that it is better" (oh, how infinitely better, dear reader!) "to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." And Count Brederode, the chief of all the Gueux when that body was started, and from whom so much was expected, where was he? Alas for poor human nature, and for his own renown!—he too had been found wanting in the day of trial.

Sustained by no strong principles, and having no sympathies with the higher sentiments of his oppressed fellows, he had fallen from his fidelity to them. The course of events had changed him too from a champion of the people's rights to a cringing vassal of the oppressor, and then again, as it seems, to a noisy patriot,—dying a few months afterwards of disappointment and hard drinking. So history informs us.

And thus with regard to all, or most of the leaders of the confederacy, this is the summing-up: "Of the chieftains to whom the people had been accustomed to look for support and encouragement, some had rallied to the government, some were in exile, some were in prison. Montigny, closely watched in Spain, was virtually a captive, pining for the young bride to whom he had been wedded amid such brilliant festivities but a few months before his departure, and for the child which was never to look upon its father's face. His colleague, Marquis Berghen, more fortunate, was already dead." This then was, or seemed to be, the hopeless state of the famous band of Beggars at the date to which our story has reached. Doubtless it was well that it should be so; for these were not the instruments by which God had ordained to bring about the deliverance of His people.

And the Prince of Orange—what of him? A few words must suffice here. Very soon after his departure from Antwerp after its pacification, he sought out the Count of Egmont, who, heedless of the hidden dangers by which he was surrounded, was pursuing a headlong career of misplaced devotion to the king, and of severity towards his former friends and confederates. Warning the count of these perils, and entreating him with all the warmth of strong affection, though ineffectually, to take measures for his safety, these brothers in arms embraced and parted, never to meet again. The prince's next step was to address a letter to King Philip, once more resigning all his

offices, and announcing his intention of departing for Germany; adding, that he should be always ready to place himself and his property at the king's orders in everything which he believed conducive to the true service of His Majesty.

This step was not taken too soon; for, as afterwards was known, letters had already been written by the treacherous and cruel Philip to Alva, instructing him to arrest the prince as soon as he could lay hands upon him, and not to let his trial last more than twenty-four hours. Having been foiled in his base scheme by the timely flight of the prince, the vindictive oppressor seized upon and confiscated all his property in the Netherlands.

"With the departure of Orange," writes the historian, "a total eclipse seemed to come over the Netherlands. The country was absolutely helpless, the popular heart was cold with apprehension. All persons at all implicated in the late troubles, or suspected of heresy, fled from their homes. Fugitive soldiers were hunted into rivers, cut to pieces in the fields, hanged, burned, or drowned like dogs, without quarter, and without remorse. The most industrious and valuable part of the population left the land in droves. . . . The new religion was banished from all the cities; every conventicle was broken up by armed men; the preachers and leading members were hanged, their disciples were beaten with rods, reduced to beggary, or imprisoned, even if they sometimes escaped the scaffold. An incredible number, however, were executed for religious causes. Hardly a village so small, says the Antwerp chronicler, but that it could furnish one, two, or three hundred victims to the executioner. The new churches were levelled to the ground, and out of their timbers gallows were constructed. It was thought ingenious pleasantry to hang the Reformers upon the beams under which they had hoped to worship God."

Much more might be added; but enough has been written to show into what depths of misery the once happy and flourishing land had sunk. It is interesting to know, however, that these persecutions had no power to separate from their love to Christ, any more than from the love of Christ, those who were truly His. That there were many instances of men and women abandoning their profession of the doctrines of the Reformers is doubtless the fact. Those who loved their possessions better than their creed,—their lives than their Lord,—were unable to contend against the influences surrounding them, and were suddenly converted into zealous Catholics. But such as these were no loss to the real Church.

On the other hand, there were those on whom these atrocities and sorrows had the blessed effect of sanctifying both their bodies and their souls, increasing their love to the Saviour, or fixing them, if wavering, in their steadier adherence to "the faith once delivered to the saints." Among these was the Prince of Orange himself. For "about this time," we are told by the historian to whose valuable work we have been so greatly indebted, "a deep change came over his mind. Hitherto his course of life and habits of mind had not led him to deal very earnestly with things beyond the world. But the severe duties, the grave character of the cause to which his days were henceforth to be devoted, had already led him to a closer inspection of the essential attributes of Christianity. He was now enrolled for life as a soldier of the Reformation. The Reformation was henceforth his father-land, the sphere of his duty and affection. The religious Reformers became his brethren, whether in France, Germany, the Netherlands, or England. Yet his mind had taken a higher flight than that of the most eminent Reformers. His goal was—religious liberty. Even while favouring more and more the cause of the purified Church, and becoming daily more alive to the

corruption of Rome, he was yet willing to tolerate all forms of worship, and to leave reason to combat error. Without a particle of cant or fanaticism, he had become a deeply religious man. Hitherto he had been only a man of the world and a statesman; but from this time forth he began calmly to rely upon God's providence in all the emergencies of his eventful life. His letters, written to his most confidential friends, to be read only by themselves, . . . abundantly prove his sincere and simple trust."

What effect this change or advance in the character of the hero of the Netherlands had upon his subsequent course may hereafter be seen. For the present, we must return to our two feeble travellers, whom we left just now in the streets of Leyden.

"I think we must be near the place now, nurse," said the younger and weaker of the two women.

They had turned out of the wider street in which we found them, and were now traversing the pavement of a narrower and meaner, yet business-like thoroughfare, on the banks of one of the numerous canals, or branches of the Rhine, by which the city was intersected. Hitherto they had met with no interruption; for, though the day was not far spent, there were few comparatively in the streets. Probably, also, the age of the elder and the evident infirmity of the younger of the strangers had staved off the curiosity of those whom they had encountered.

"This is the street, for certain," said the elderly woman; "that is, if you have read the name aright, my pet."

"And there is the sign of which she has written to me," returned the younger person, in a tone of joyful recognition, as she pointed to a huge golden key suspended in mid-air from the upper story of an old, many-gabled house a little

way in advance of them. A few dozens of steps brought them beneath the swinging symbol or emblem of a locksmith's trade. "It is the first door to the left," she added; and then, with a hurried, trembling hand, she knocked at the door thus indicated.

A light footstep within, and then the door was cautiously opened. One moment of suspense, then the thick Flanders veil was lifted; and then, with a cry in which were strongly blended the opposite emotions of joy and terror, the fair porteress sprang forward, clasped her visitor in her stronger arms, and showered kisses fast and thick upon her lips.

"Dear Cousin Nina!"

"Dear cousin—dear Sister Lysken!"

A few more hurried words passed, and then the one-armed follower was relieved of his burden, and dismissed with a few kindly words, spoken almost in a whisper. Then the three females entered in at the low doorway.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Lysken's Home.

THE habitation into which the two strangers (who were none other than Nina Franck and her old nurse Ursel) were ushered was small and lowly, but spotlessly clean. The house, however, was large enough for its occupants; and while Lysken is tenderly and lovingly giving her undivided attention to her unexpected, but most welcome guests, we shall briefly go over the domestic history of the two years which have elapsed since the cousins last parted.

Lysken Franck no longer bore that name. It seems strange to us, in these quiet, peaceable days, that in times of bitter persecution, a complete suspension of the great ordinance of creation never took place. They must have had strong faith or wonderful courage—amounting, as some may think, to rashness—those matrimonial pairs who, in the face of daily perils, poverty, imprisonment, banishment, and martyrdom itself, could yet unite themselves together in conjugal bonds.

Lysken Franck had been some months married to Kaspar

Arnoldzoon, knowing that his worldly calling would take him much from his home, and that his heavenly calling, together with his boldness for the faith, was constantly exposing him to innumerable dangers. Yet she had married him; and up to the present time no particular alarms had disturbed the small household. To be sure, whenever Kaspar started on one of his journeys it was uncertain whether he would be permitted to return in safety; for more likely than not, the next news of him would be that he was arrested on the charge of heresy. But Lysken had the strong faith, and her husband had the wonderful courage, of which we have written; so they put their trust in God, and went on in the path of duty.

Probably the quiet obscurity of their lowly position in Leyden was in some measure a screen to them. The young lace-maker (for Lysken had persevered in this branch of home industry, and had become expert in it), spending much of her time with her lace-pillow and bobbins, when not engaged in household duties, had no disposition to gossip with her neighbours, nor, indeed, to make much acquaintance among them, except when they needed friendly help; and this in some measure preserved her from prying eyes and busy tongues. Besides, nothing would be got by denouncing her as a heretic, even if the sympathies of a great majority of her own class had not been enlisted in her favour on that very account. As for Arnoldzoon, his perils were more abroad than at home, where (though the nature of his concealed trade and the real object of his journeys were understood) he had hitherto been undisturbed.

With Lysken lived her father, who had once more established himself in the mechanical part of his musical profession which was so hastily and ruinously broken up in Ghent. He was still an anxious and timid man, loving the truth, and hiding it in his heart, but making no open boast of the treasure he

had found. His spare time was now taken up in the reconstruction of the ingenious musical contrivance which had so occupied his thoughts in past days. Certainly, no one, watching Gerald Franck as he ceaselessly wrought at his bench, and knowing so little as was known of him in Leyden, would have set him down as a formidable enemy to the state, or the state religion either.

The only other member of Lysken's small establishment was Hans van Muler, the young printer, who was still engaged in the office of Giles Arnoldzoon, at the sign of the Golden Key. Ostensibly the proceedings of this printing establishment were sufficiently within the line and rule of orthodoxy to satisfy the Inquisition: covertly and secretly the press of Giles Arnoldzoon was helping on the faith of Christ and the principles of the Reformation.

Serenely, then, if not free from anxiety as to their own future, and certainly full of care regarding the ark of God, and of sympathy towards their suffering brethren and sisters in the faith—yet serenely, because their trust was in God—did His humble ones pursue their appointed course, not knowing through what strait and difficult and thorny paths it might lead them, but well knowing that it was an upward path withal, with a promise and a hope and a certainty belonging to it to cheer them onward: the promise being, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved:" "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father on His throne:" the hope being a good hope through grace of being more than conquerors through Him who loved them; and the certainty being that above all the tumults and strife and terrors of earth was One who was all the while making the wrath of man to praise Him.

Yet, though serene, there was one peculiar personal sorrow

felt by each of the members of that humble family—most of all by Lysken. Her brother Karl—where was he? The reader will remember that, two years and more before the time to which we have arrived, he had sailed away in one of Floris Franck's merchant ships, bound for Venice. That ship had never returned; and neither Karl Franck nor any of the crew had ever been heard of.

We must break off here, for the intelligence brought by Nina to her cousin, is too weighty and interesting to be introduced at the end of a chapter.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Secret Meeting, and an Alarm.

"DEAR Nina," said the young hostess, when, after partially recovering from the effect of her journey, the Antwerp cousin was reclining on a temporary couch hastily prepared for her, "it is but a poor home you have condescended to visit; and if you had forgotten your parting promise to come and see me, I need not have wondered. But what we lack in grandeur shall be made up in welcome. I would my husband were at home to show you more honour than I can."

"Alas! and is he away on one of his dangerous journeys?" asked the invalid cousin, who until now had been too far exhausted to reply to Lysken's eager inquiries except in monosyllables.

"He left Leyden almost a month since, and I know not when he may return; for his movements have to be made with so much uncertainty as well as secrecy, that even he himself cannot always tell what his plans will be from day to day."

"I wonder you can bear his absence, Lysken, even were there no dangers beyond those common to all travellers."

"We know not how much strength may be given us to bear what is laid upon us in the way of duty," said Lysken, with a pleasant smile, although her lips trembled a little as she spoke.

"And you are right, my sweet cousin," exclaimed Nina, with unwonted energy. "Do I not myself feel it to be so? But a few days ago," she added, "I could not have believed that I could have taken this journey with no other companion than my poor Ursel and good Jan, or could have borne its fatigues. Yet I am here; and have I not a right to say that God has helped me? Dear Lysken," she continued, speaking as though with a strong effort to restrain her sobs and tears, "you spoke but now of the poverty of your home. You little deem that your home is a palace to mine. Alas! I have no home."

"Nina! dear cousin!" cried Lysken, starting with amazement and disbelief, or as though she thought she had miscomprehended her cousin's words. And then she added, "Your journey has over-tired you, dear Nina; you mean not what you have said in very truth?"

"It is true, though," interposed old Ursel, who was in attendance on her young mistress; "it is true. My pet has no longer a home in Antwerp, nor father, nor sisters. Neither have I a home," she added, rather angrily.

Lysken turned from one speaker to the other with cheeks suddenly paled. She could not command utterance in reply to news so unexpected and inexplicable,—unexplained, at least. It was Nina who first broke the painful silence; and, though it was a sad story she had to tell, she gained courage as she went on. It was the courage of a true and living and actuating faith,—the courage which endures, as seeing Him who is invisible.

This is Nina's story, told in other words, and also with

some additional explanations, which she herself could not then have given:

For some months past Floris Franck, who had almost entirely withdrawn himself from commerce, had been in close and secret communication with the Prince of Orange, and had been making preparations for a lengthened sojourn in England, where it was hoped he might be beneficially employed in moving the English Protestant government on behalf of his oppressed countrymen. He had been encouraged and assisted in carrying out this project by Sir Francis Walsingham, the English ambassador at Antwerp, and had so far advanced in it as to have safely transmitted the bulk of his property across the sea. His two elder daughters had also, with some difficulty, been persuaded to a short separation from their father and sister, and, properly attended, had sailed some two or three weeks before, in a merchant ship bound for the port of London. There they had safely arrived, and were for the time guests of the London correspondent of their father. Nina, however, at her earnest request, had remained at Antwerp, waiting with him until some final arrangements permitted them to follow.

Meanwhile Floris Franck held frequent, though very secret, intercourse with such ministers of the Reformed faith as still survived the most bitter persecution, and who were driven from place to place, having no certain dwelling, but often took refuge, as it were, "in caves and dens of the earth," unless they could obtain shelter and sustenance with some brother in the faith who had sufficient courage to brave the threats of that new edict which sentenced to the gallows not only all ministers and teachers, but any who suffered their houses to be used for religious purposes. Among the ministers thus harboured by Floris Franck were two already mentioned in these memoirs, Franciscus Junius and Guy Regis, the

ex-monk, both of whom, under various disguises, stealthily flitted from place to place, holding midnight meetings where they might, administering the ordinances in secret, and comforting and encouraging the hidden followers of the Lord with the hopes and promises of the gospel.

One night, long after dusk, about a week or ten days before the unexpected appearance of Nina at Leyden, Mynheer Franck, professing to his sister and his remaining servants that business of importance called him from home at that late hour,—which was indeed true,—bent his steps towards the canal on which his warehouses were situated. Here he paused at the narrow door of one of them, and after cautiously looking around him, gave the accustomed signal, which was immediately responded to by the one-armed watchman within, who presently opened the door, and carefully closed and bolted it after his master had entered. Then the two groped their way onward by the light of a dim lamp into a long narrow apartment, which was now cleared of the greater part of its merchandise, saving that (as far as could be seen by two or three dull lights suspended on the walls) a number of empty boxes and planks were arranged as seats.

The only person then present, however, besides the master and man, was one, apparently a sailor, but whom the eyes of Floris recognised as the pastor Junius. Between these two, warm and brotherly greetings were exchanged.

The disguised minister was seated at a small table, on which was placed the elements and vessels of the communion of the body and blood of Christ,—namely, a loaf of bread, a flagon of wine, a platter or two, and a silver cup. A printed volume, much worn, as though from long or rough handling, lay before him on the table.

"Our brethren and sisters are late," said the supposed mariner.

THE MIDNIGHT COMMUNION.

"There have been fresh alarms in the city to-day," replied the merchant, sadly. "A proclamation has been posted, offering a large reward to any who will inform against the suspected meetings of heretics. I fear me if many will venture hither to-night."

Notwithstanding this augury, however, it was not long ere a goodly number of worshippers (led in, as they arrived, by the watchman) were seated around the table, and presently the solemn service was commenced.

It would be interesting, and not uninstructive, if we could accompany the disguised shepherd and his persecuted but faithful flock in their devotions, and especially in their celebration of the simple, but sublime and touching ordinance, through which they showed the Lord's death till He should come, their faith in His resurrection and mediation, and their love to Him and to each other. Reluctantly compelled, in this recapitulation of events, to omit many interesting particulars, we can only record that it was long past midnight ere the little company broke up their meeting and separated, —separated as those who might never meet again in like manner, until all should "sit down' at the marriage supper" in heaven. Embracing each other, therefore, most tenderly, as brethren in the same faith, followers of the same Lord, and fellow sufferers under the same persecution, they cautiously emerged one by one from the low door abutting upon the canal, until only the owner of the warehouse, his faithful one-armed servant, the pastor, and three other brethren remained behind.

Then arose a friendly discussion as to whom for that night should belong the perilous honour of harbouring their teacher.

"By right, reverend sir, you should be my guest," said one of the two, a trader named Behrend; "and in my house you will rest more commodiously than in the loft above."

"Ah, but who will warrant it shall be as safely?" demanded another of the little group. "We know that thou art heart-sound, brother Behrend, and wouldst defend thy guest even at the expense of thy life's blood; but report says that thy worthy dame looks but sourly on us and on our assemblies. She thinks, as I have heard, that there is little profit and much risk in serving the Lord Jesus in such times as these."

A deep sigh from brother Behrend seemed partly to confirm the truth of this representation. Yet he hazarded an apology for his dame. "She hath been grievously afflicted both in body and mind," said he, "and Satan's temptations have been strong upon her. Nevertheless, my wife loves the truth in her heart, though she is somewhat timid."

"Enough said," interposed pastor Junius, here. "What need of any further refuge than my ancient loft, which has so often served me, and in which many a time I have held sweet converse with my Saviour and God? Methinks I am better off than He who had not where to lay His head."

"But He did not refuse to lodge with His true friends, when it was in their power to receive Him into their houses," said brother Franck; "and you must go with me to-night,—it may be for the last time."

"I had thought of proposing this, if you would receive me," said the pastor; "the more so that I would see your daughter Nina once more, ere she be lost to us." And so it was agreed.

Just at this moment, however, a whispered communication was made to the merchant, and a scrap of paper was put into his hand by his porter, the hasty reading of which resulted in an instantaneous change of plans.

"Extinguish all but one of the lights," said the master, in a suppressed tone of command, "and then bar the door. Friends," he went on, "there has been treachery in some

quarter. My house, since I left it, has been entered by the officers of the Inquisition, and having taken possession of my papers, they are still there, waiting my return home. It is well that their information was not more precise, and that they followed me not hither. Yet who shall say that they may not even now be on the track? Friends, this must be a hurried parting. Jan shall conduct you through the secret passage to the cellar, thence you can make your exit unobserved. You, sir,"—this to the pastor,—"must not remain here, nor can I take you with me——"

"Better return to Rotterdam as you came, on board my smack as a sailor, sir," interposed one of the little party who had not before spoken. "We will lift anchor as soon as you are on board, and the officers of the Inquisition will have quick work if they follow us."

"Whatever is done must be done quickly," said Franck; "and I think our brother's proposal is a safe one."

"And what will you do?" was asked by the pastor.

"I will wait only to see you all gone, and then I will bend my steps homeward."

"But why should you not flee while there is time and opportunity? The same bark which conveys me away would also deliver you from this present danger," observed the minister.

"You forget my daughter and my household," said the merchant. "Besides, flight would be an admission of crime,—the great crime of worshipping God," he added, bitterly. "No, I will meet my accusers face to face. But I pray you, brethren, to take your departure ere it be too late."

So they parted with hastily-spoken farewells,—the maimed watchman preceding the minister and his friends through the dark secret passage, and opening for them the trap-door, which admitted them into a back yard, and thence into a

narrow lane. In a few minutes the man returned, and he and his master only occupied the warehouse.

"Remove these tell-tales to their hiding-place, Jan," said the merchant, pointing to the plates, and flagon, and cup, and book, which had so lately been solemnly used, "and then unbar the door."

"You will not venture among them, master?" said Jan, anxiously.

"I shall return to my home, Jan."

"They will drag you away to prison, sir."

"That must be as God wills it," said the merchant, calmly. "But, in case it should be so, let me do an act of justice while it is in my power." He took out his purse as he spoke. "You have served me faithfully in this, as in all other matters; and now,"—there was a chink as of golden coins,—"if you hear in the morning of my arrest, here is that which will sustain you till you find a new master."

"Your honour was always good," said the old sailor; "but put back your gold, sir. It isn't for that I have been your watchman here at these times,—it has been for Christ's sake."

"True; and we are not master and servant, for one is our Master, and all we are brethren. Nevertheless let it be so. Receive the money, not as wages, but as a love-token: you need it, which I do not. And now I will go. If you see me here in the morning betimes, well; if not, see to your own safety, Jan. Or if I should be removed,"—Floris faltered a little here, but, speedily recovering firmness, he added,—"my daughter may need your help."

"Which shall be willingly and lovingly yielded, as God may help me," said the man; and thus they parted at the warehouse door.

CHAPTER XXX.

Nina's Story.

IT will be better now that Nina should herself take up the thread of her story.

"Think, dear Lysken, what agony I was in when, after secretly despatching that note, in hope that by some means or other it would do its errand, the inquisitor, in soft and placid tones, began to question me about my dear father, desiring me to tell him whither he was gone, and assuring me (which I knew to be false) that no harm was intended against him. He wished only, he said, to put to him a few insignificant questions, which might easily be answered. He also questioned me as to what visitors we had had of late, while he apologised to me for the alarm he had caused in our household, which, however, he assured me was unnecessary.

"I was glad then that my father had not made me his confidante; for though I could guess whither he was gone, and sent the message to him thither at a venture, yet I could answer with a clear conscience that I knew not; nor was the inquisitor, with all his blandishments, able to extract from me

anything further. So presently he left me, and closeted himself with Aunt Philippa.

"The time passed on till long after midnight, and then I began to hope that my dear father had received my billet, had taken warning, and had made his escape. But in this I was deceived; for presently I heard his footstep, and then, after knocking at the door according to his wont, he entered.

"I know not what passed then for an hour or more; because the unwelcome visitor and my father were shut up alone in his book-room, while I lay on my couch, waiting and trembling with dread for my dear father, and praying that, if it were God's will, he might clear himself, and be rid of his guest. But this was not to be."

"Did not your aunt keep you company in all this time?" asked Lysken.

"Nay, cousin; only she sent messages from time to time, saying how much too discomposed she was to see even me; but bidding me keep up good heart, for that no harm would come to my father, the visit not being intended for him. At this I wondered much; but alas! it was afterwards explained to me."

"I am afraid to guess what more you have to tell concerning that night," said Lysken.

"It is not much, dear cousin; and I will pass it over as lightly as I am able. After a long time (as it seemed to me, a whole night), my dear father came in to me, and tenderly embraced me, telling me to be of good cheer, for that he was leaving me in God's protection.

"'Leaving me! Ah, what did he mean?' I asked.

"'I am under the necessity of accompanying this gentleman,' he said, turning to the inquisitor, who had glided noiselessly into the room. And my father then gave me a warning look, which seemed to tell me to restrain my

emotions, and to say nothing that would be afterwards urged against me. So, at least, I understood the caution; and I know not how, but strength seemed given to me to say, somewhat boldly, though with a failing heart, that I trusted he would soon return.

"'It will be as God wills it,' he said, adding, that it would be better for me to retire to rest as soon as he was gone, and not to be alarmed if he did not return on the following day, which, indeed, was even then almost breaking. Then he once more embraced me; and before I could recover myself he was gone, and the grave inquisitor with him Soon afterwards I heard the sound of wheels, which assured me that a carriage had been kept in waiting in the street hard by, and that all this had been planned beforehand."

"My poor Nina!" said Lysken, weeping in sympathy. "I can guess the rest," she added.

"Nay, not all," continued Nina, with more composure; yet her voice was sorrowful in its tone. "Hear what more I have to tell. Hardly had my father and the inquisitor departed, and while I was sadly bemoaning what had happened, and was on my knees praying to God to help my father in his sore strait, when Aunt Philippa hastily entered my room, and cried out for her brother.

"'Know you not that he is gone away with that priest who was with you so long?' I asked.

"'Gone! No, it cannot be—your father taken away!' she exclaimed.

"'Heard you not the wheels of the carriage, aunt?' I said.

"'And if I did, they told me nothing,' said she, angrily, yet despairingly, I thought.

"'They have taken him away to prison,' I replied; and the little fortitude that had remained to me departed, so that I broke out into a loud cry of sorrow.

"Upon this my aunt also gave way to an agony of grief, saying again and again, 'Oh! I meant it not so! I meant it not so! Dear Floris! Dear Floris!' meaning my father. And then she hastily left me.

"I did not then understand her words; and in truth I was too deeply plunged in grief to pay much heed to them, though I could but wonder what Aunt Philippa could mean when she said, 'I meant it not so.' On the morrow I learned to understand it better, alas!

"That was a sorrowful day which was just then dawning; but God was merciful to me; for in the extremity of my distress, as I lay on my day couch (not having gone to bed, nor, indeed, thrown off any of my garments), He was pleased to cause a deep sleep to fall upon me; and, oh, Cousin Lysken! I had such pleasant dreams!"

"Pleasant, dear Nina?"

"Nay, pleasant is too cold a word—too cold and feeble, dear Lysken. It was more like a heavenly vision that I had. Have you not read how, in old times, the angels of the Lord were commissioned to appear to His people in dreams and visions of the night, to strengthen them and to confirm their faith?"

"Yes, truly, I have read so," said Lysken; "but methought those times had passed away."

"Nay, but I know not why this should be, Lysken," said the young enthusiast; "and I would not think otherwise than that an angel stood by me then, telling me to be of good cheer, for that not a hair of my father's head should be harmed."

"The Lord Jesus has told us this also, without a dream," said Lysken, with a loving smile. "Has He not said that the very hairs of our heads are so precious to Him that they are all numbered? Yet I doubt not your vision, dear Nina;

for why should not God send His angels to us now, if He sees fit? But did your dream or vision end there, Nina?"

"No; for presently, in the place of the angel, stood one whom I have known ere now. He lives in this city."

"Not my husband, Nina?"

"No, not your husband; but a good Christian. His name is Merula."

"An advocate. Yes; I have heard of him," said Lysken, looking rather sorry, perhaps, that her cousin's beatific vision should have degenerated into things "of the earth, earthy"—that the angel should have changed into a mortal. She said nothing of this, however; and Nina went on—

"Yes, an advocate. He has been betrothed to my sister Margaret this year past; so there was nothing extraordinary in my dreaming of the one who is to be my dear brother. Do you think so?" she asked, calmly.

"No, indeed, Nina."

"Well, then, I dreamt that Paul Merula was with me, and he smiled pleasantly on me, and then walked quietly away, beckoning me to follow. Then I awoke, and found it was a dream, and that the sun was high in the heavens. I had slept soundly five hours, and dear Ursel, when she found me on the couch in the morning, had covered me up, and watched by my side."

"And need enough, my pet," interposed Ursel. "She was shivering in her sleep with the cold morning air; and so I brought her a down quilt, and wrapped it round her."

"I had not felt the cold," said Nina; "but nurse's care made my sleep the longer; and when I woke I felt so happy—so happy, for I believed that my dream had been sent me as a token for good. And I had need of this encouragement; for as soon as I had collected my thoughts I remembered all the terrible events of the past night, and was told that there

were two officials then in the house, who had taken charge of all my father's property, and that all the household was in confusion and dismay."

"And dear Uncle Floris—heard you aught of him?"

"Not that day, Lysken; but the day after came one who told us that, after a long examination before the chief inquisitor in Antwerp, my father had been recommitted to prison. There was poor comfort in this; but God sent me comfort in more ways than I have told you; and one of these other ways was when our faithful Jan, who had charge of the warehouses, came and told me that my dear father had appointed him to watch over me, and declared that he would defend me, if needed, with his one arm, as long as he had life in him. I told him that I would not ask him to fight for me, but that I gratefully accepted his offered protection."

"And your Aunt Philippa—said you not, Nina, that you learned on the next day the meaning of her strange cry, 'I meant not that—I meant not that?'"

"Ah yes. After keeping her chamber all day, and refusing to admit me when I would have gone in to her, saying that she was too ill to see any one but her maid, she came to me. And oh how shocked I was to see her! It seemed as though she had added ten years to her life in that single day.

"'Don't touch me, Nina, don't touch me!' she almost shrieked, when I had risen, and would have embraced her.

"'Dear aunt,' I began to say; but she stopped me.

"'I am not your dear aunt,' she cried, 'but your destruction—your ruin. It is I who have done it all. Speak, girl!' she went on, vehemently; 'tell me you hate me—that you spit upon me!' And then, overcome by the violence of her passion, my poor aunt sank to the floor, and fainted.

"I was so alarmed, Lysken, that I almost fainted too; but, soon recovering, I called loudly for Ursel, who, with my aunt's

maid, presently brought her to; and then she dismissed the servant, saying that she desired to speak with me alone.

"'Do you know what I have done, Nina?' she asked.

"'I can but guess from your words, aunt, that it is you who have betrayed my dear father,' I answered.

"And so it was. I need not tell you in full, but thus it was in brief: Urged on by her father confessor, and also by a strong personal dislike to the pastor, Junius, who, under different disguises, which my aunt had penetrated, had often lodged at our house, she had secretly given information of his being expected in Antwerp on the previous evening, and of the probability that he would take up his abode with us as before, for the night. 'But,' said Aunt Philippa, 'I gave this information on the solemn condition that your father should be held harmless. Alas! alas! and now I see that even priests are not to be trusted!'

"I then asked my aunt, as calmly as I could, how she had found out that the pastor would be in Antwerp at such a time.

"'I learned it from Catherine Behrend, the wife of the drysalter, who is one of the Reformed,' said she, 'the woman being alarmed for the safety of her husband, and thinking it would be well if the shepherd were taken, so that the sheep might be scattered.'"

"The wretched traitor!" exclaimed Lysken, indignantly.

"My aunt said, moreover, that, unwilling to disclose the place of their meeting, which indeed she could herself only conjecture—and this because of my father's safety—she had planned for the inquisitor to be at our house, awaiting their return. 'And now,' said she 'why do you not curse me, Nina?'

"'I cannot do that, aunt. I will pray for you,' I said.

"'I am your father's murderer,' said she, wringing her hands.

"'No; that is only as God will,' I was enabled to answer; 'and I will pray to Him for my father.'"

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Flesh weak; the Spirit willing.

THE remainder of Nina's story may be briefly told.

It seemed that the merchant Franck and his handsome dwelling-house were prizes too great and important to be relinquished now that the grasp of the law was upon them. So, though nothing more important than his known sympathy and connection with the Reformed had as yet been brought against him in his first and second examinations, enough had transpired to sustain the officers of the Inquisition in having taken full possession of his property. Even Nina herself was in some danger of being sent to prison for refusing to answer certain interrogatories put to her by one of the officials. Probably, however, some compassion for bodily infirmity, or contempt for her weakness, saved her from this doom: but she was ordered to quit her father's house. This, after hastily collecting her little personalties, she did, removing with Ursel to the mean apartment of Jan, the one-armed sailor, who, according to his promise, had previously presented himself to her in the quality of her

appointed protector; and who eagerly entreated her to take refuge with him and his wife in a narrow street near to one of the canals.

Nina and Ursel were not the only ejected members of the merchant's family. Most of the servants were dismissed by the authorities without payment of wages due to them; and though Aunt Philippa was permitted, as a faithful Catholic, to retain possession of her apartments, with a servant to attend her, she was given to understand that in case of the condemnation of her brother—of which there could be no doubt—the whole of his property now in the hands of the officers would be absolutely forfeited to the state. The servants of the Inquisition gave this information with evident satisfaction, and added that it would be wise in the lady to provide herself, as soon as convenient, with another home.

The poor lady, however, had at that time little power left for making any effort either on her own behalf, or for the undoing of the mischief she had wrought upon her brother and his family. Immediately after the interview with Nina, described in the former chapter, she had returned to her room in a state of frenzy bordering for a time upon madness. And when her mind, after a few hours, regained its equilibrium, her bodily strength suddenly failed, and she was scarcely able to rise from her couch. Nina would gladly have remained to comfort her aunt; but this was not permitted, and indeed, her presence would probably only have tended to a renewal of the unhappy woman's previous agitation. In this condition, therefore, she was compelled to leave her aunt; and this we also must do for a time, to follow the niece in her further adventures.

"All the promises of God," in Christ, "are Yea, and in Him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us." These words are true. They have ever been found to be true by the persecuted saints

of God. Nina believed them fervently—believed that there could not be a promise found between the two boards of the Bible she had been enabled to rescue from its hiding-place in her father's house, and to convey with her to her refuge,—not a promise which did not rightfully belong to her, individually and personally,—because she was a child of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It had, at one time, been difficult to Nina to realize this. It was difficult to understand. With the whole land reeking with the blood of martyrs, or scorched with the fires which had consumed them:—with the full knowledge that hundreds and thousands of the excellent of the earth and the favourites of heaven had expiated in tortures and death their faith and love and hope,—how could a weak girl understand, without Divine teaching,—that all, all the promises of God to be found in His Word, were inviolably sealed home to all believers in Christ, as inalienably theirs?

She was troubled by this weak faith of hers. She wanted to believe; she would believe; she did believe; and the prayer one day had burst from her lips, "Lord! I do believe; help Thou my unbelief!"

Not long after this sore struggle, and while turning over the leaves of that precious volume which, at rare intervals—rare, because of danger—she was permitted to have in her own hands, she lighted on these words: "Let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

"I have found! I have found!" cried Nina, as she paused here. "I understand it now. How foolish of me, that I understood it not before! Life and death; things present, and things to come; all—all; everything; sufferings, perse-

cutions, poverty, torture, death; all, all are among those all things which are contained in those promises which in Christ are Yea, and in Christ are Amen, to the glory of God by us."

In these comparatively easy-going days of Christian profession, the light and joy and liberty which broke in upon Nina's soul in the reading and putting together of these Scriptures, may to some appear to have been fanatical. They were not so to her; they were real, because she could understand now how all the promises of God centred in His glory, while they amply provided for the eternal welfare of His faithful ones. How could it be otherwise, when among those all things which belonged to the Christian, was death itself,—death, that last enemy to be destroyed! death transformed into the Christian's friend — the porter to the very gates of glory!

So, in her mean and uncomfortable place of refuge,—uncomfortable, at least, in all outward appurtenances, except in the faithful devotion of her nurse, her one-armed protector, and his homely wife,—when Nina opened her father's rescued volume, and read these words:—"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee,"—she would feel assured that, with all faithful witnesses for Christ, she and her now imprisoned father had a personal interest in those wonderful promises—that to them they were Yea and Amen (yes, so shall it be) in Christ Jesus; and that therefore nothing could harm them. Nothing harm them? Nothing, when the cord and the stake

and the torch, which had destroyed so many, were ready for them also? No, nothing—or what was the meaning of this promise—"I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him; with long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation?"

These promises and their apparent non-fulfilment, according to the weak conceptions of sense, had puzzled and distressed Nina once; but, with her invigorated and enlightened faith, they puzzled her no more, for *all* things were theirs who loved Christ and His gospel; all things; life and death, things present, and things to come. It was not, then, to end in this world; the grand fulfilment of the promises was reserved for the next. Most gladly, then, could she glory even in tribulation and distress and peril and persecution and nakedness of earthly resources, in the martyr's flames, if so it might be, for these too were both in the promises and in the way to them.

You will not be surprised that this new, at least this enlarged view of the privileges of every Christian, wonderfully inspirited the weak girl under the trial she was so suddenly, if not altogether unexpectedly, called to bear. It could scarcely be expected that Nina should be joyful in tribulation, seeing that it was her father who was in such jeopardy. Indeed, we know that no affliction is, for the present, joyous, but grievous. But Nina's faith did more than make her joyful; it made her strong. The once timid and nervous, and somewhat dreamy child, whose constitutional infirmity, combined with the luxury of wealth, had fostered inaction, now became the bold and energetic woman. The power of faith seemed, indeed, to re-act upon her body, for, to her own astonishment, she was able to move from her couch and endure exertion of which, at any former time, she would have deemed herself, and been deemed by all around her, incapable.

And as her faith did not tell her that because God was on her side and her father's side, there was nothing for her to do; but as it rather gave her encouragement and spirit to work, seeing that He was working, and would work with her, Nina daily, and for many hours a day, employed herself in waiting on those former friends of her father whom she judged would have influence in the state to procure his release. She went to one burgomaster after another to entreat their aid. She presented herself at the gate of the prison in which her father was confined, and was admitted to him, but not to waste moments, which were too precious to be lost, in useless lamentations, or even in soft endearments, but to take his instructions, and to bear messages to any who might be disposed to bear testimony in his favour.

Rebuff after rebuff did poor Nina sustain in the course of her three or four days' wearisome labours in the city. She found, as others have found, the truth conveyed in the words of the poet:

> "The friends who in our sunshine live,
> When winter comes, are gone;
> And they who have but tears to give,
> Must weep those tears alone."

Nina, however, was too firmly sustained, and had too much to do, to have time for giving tears, except perhaps in the short summer nights, when no one but her God was by; and she bore very meekly, but with none the less fortitude for that, the defection of friends too cautious and prudent to be mixed up in the affairs of an acknowledged heretic, and, probably, a suspected traitor.

After a second visit to the prison in which her father was confined, Nina was told by the governor that the prisoner (for some reason unknown or unexplained) was to be removed the next day to Ghent, there to undergo a more formal trial,

to which his previous examinations had been only preliminary. Nina was not surprised at this intimation. It was common enough for the prisoners of the Inquisition to be shifted from place to place, in some cases to baffle the inquiries of their friends, and in others to secure a more easy condemnation.

But if not surprised, for a moment Nina's resolution failed her. It was but for a moment, however. The Lord Jehovah was in Ghent as well as in Antwerp; and still He was calling on her to work for her father's life and liberty.

"I can do no more here," said she, in self-communing; "and if I go to Ghent whom do I know there? If, indeed, my uncle Gerard were there—but he is as timid as the rest, and were he not, he is now in Leyden. In Leyden! And there lives Margaret's lover and affianced husband, of whom I dreamed. Strange, that in these four days past I have not once thought of him! And will he not help me? And my sweet cousin Lysken, too! If she help me no further than with her love, I am sure that will not be wanting."

And so, with her mind hastily made up, yet, may we say, divinely directed? did Nina return to her lowly refuge, and announce her determination of proceeding the next day to Leyden, on a visit to her cousin and in search of aid for her imprisoned father.

"I have a brother in Leyden," said Jan, nothing doubting that wherever his ward went he was to be in her train, which sentiment of devotion to Nina's interests and safety he expressed in other words.

"But, Jan," said Nina, sadly, "I have no means of repaying you for all this kindness."

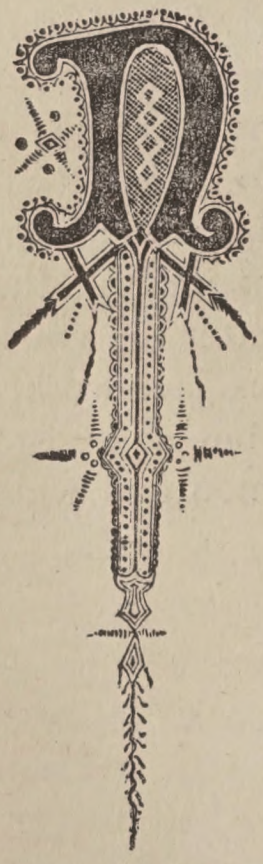
"I say not so," he rejoined; "or rather, I am already overpaid. And, payment or no payment, my word is passed. Said I not to my honoured master that you should have one faithful servant while Jan lives?"

So, without further words, preparations were made for the voyage; and on the following day Nina, her nurse, and Jan, embarked in a low-built Dutch galliot, and, as we have seen, reached Leyden in safety.

It is not necessary to our story to give the particulars of the interview on the following morning between Nina and her friend the advocate, further than to say that Merula undertook the defence of Floris Franck with abundant zeal, and departed that very day for Ghent, leaving Nina the guest of her cousin—for no long space of time, however, for, anxious to be near her father, even if forbidden to hold intercourse with him, as was to be feared, she, with her two faithful followers, re-embarked a few days afterwards in a coasting vessel bound for Bergen-op-zoom, whence she proposed to proceed onward, as she might best be able, to Ghent. She was provided by the young printer, Hans, with a letter to his mother, the widow Van Muler, who yet remained in that city, carrying on her old occupation. In this letter the young lady was commended to the care of the pious lace-worker, not only as the cousin of her friend Lysken, but as a sister in the common faith, and a sufferer in the common and wide-spread persecution.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Power of Faith—New Friends.



INA'S voyage was accomplished without difficulty, and in due time she found herself in the vicinity of the large church and belfry tower in which her uncle had formerly performed sweet music, and near which lived the widow Van Muler. In Ghent, as in Leyden, and Antwerp, and Brussels, and every city and town of the Netherlands, the influence of despotic tyranny was plainly visible. No cheerful countenances were to be seen in the streets. The artizans, as in dogged silence they went to or returned from their labour, trod heavily and laggardly on the pavements, as though borne down with care; and the shopkeepers in their shops looked gloomily on their customers, who on their side wasted but few words in bargaining for the commodities they were compelled, and had the means, to buy. No wonder. Few words were best, where a stray or unguarded expression in words, and almost even in looks, might have cost the unwary offender his liberty and his goods, if not his life.

NINA'S VISIT TO THE WIDOW VAN MULER.

Without interruption, however, Nina and her followers presented themselves to the widow; and as soon as she had glanced at her son's letter, which she did as the strangers yet stood at the door, she exclaimed, in the language of Scripture, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; why standest thou without?" Accompanying this invitation by throwing the door open wide, so that all might enter, she tenderly embraced the delicate girl, and made haste to place refreshments before all her guests. After this, arrangements were soon made for their lodgings. Nina and her faithful nurse were to remain under the widow's roof; and the equally faithful Jan was conducted by the widow's youngest son, Galeyn, now a stout lad, to a safe retreat in the family of a poor Protestant near at hand, who for the love of Christ would have shared his last crust with a brother in the faith. There was no need for this, however, since Jan had some portion of his late master's bounty in his present possession; and the purse of his young mistress was not yet exhausted.

From her aged hostess Nina received confirmation, if confirmation were needed, of the dismal condition of this once flourishing and happy country. Commerce declining, manufactures decaying, industry paralyzed, confidence destroyed. This was everywhere the burden of every tongue; for these were the only complaints which might be safely uttered. But there were deeper lamentations than these, which could only be whispered between those who were known to be among the faithful, and who were sharers in each others' sorrows. For these lamentations there were plentiful materials; but there were those whose eagle-eyed faith pierced beyond the clouds which overcast the spiritual sky, and endured as seeing Him who is invisible. The widow Van Muler was one of these, and wonderfully was Nina's faith strengthened and her hope invigorated while she listened to the aged woman, who,

while busily pursuing the occupation by which she obtained her scanty subsistence, talked on in such terms as these:—

"My dear young sister, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Clouds and darkness are round about Him; but righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne. We see not, for we are blind; we hear not, for we are deaf; we understand not, for we are weak-minded and fearful. Here we know only in part; we see through a glass, darkly. But, for all this, He who sitteth in the heavens laughs, and He has persecutors in derision. He will overturn, overturn, overturn; but to His kingdom there shall be no end. He makes the wrath of man to praise Him; the remainder of it He restraineth. He hath already whet His sword; He hath bent His bow; He hath made His arrows ready against the persecutors. If they turn not, they shall be utterly destroyed; but those who trust in Him shall endure for ever. The souls of those who have been slain for the testimony of Jesus,"—here the widow's voice for a moment faltered, for she thought of her martyred husband; but she soon regained firmness and strength,—"those souls are crying day and night, from the foot of the altar, 'How long, Lord! how long?'—and shall not God avenge His own elect? I tell you He will avenge them, and that right speedily. Oh, blessed, thrice blessed, are they who endure; for they who endure to the end shall be saved. To him that overcometh shall be given to sit down on the throne of Christ, even as He overcame, and is for ever seated on the throne of God the Father. Amen, even so let it be, Lord: amen, amen!"

It was almost impossible that Nina should listen to these rapturous strains, couched, as they for the most part were, in the very words of inspired prophecy, without catching some of the sacred fire which burnt in the speaker's bosom. Nay as face answereth to face in a glass, so did the soul of Nina

answer to that of her aged friend, to whom she believed she had verily been sent, that her love and faith and hope might be more stirred up. Doubtless she had heard these inspiriting trumpet-sounds once and again from the mouths of such men as the pastor Junius and Guy Regis, the bold evangelist; but they were men. While here was a weak, poor, aged woman, —weak in herself and in her sex,—one, moreover, who had passed through deep waters of trial and affliction, and yet who could triumph in God her Saviour, and count her life not dear to her, so she might win Christ, and be found in Him! While gazing on the glowing countenance of the poor widow, and listening to her words, Nina could but think of those glorious women of old of whom she had heard, who had themselves been tortured, not accepting deliverance, because they looked for a better resurrection.

Even poor Ursel, who sat by in attendance on her mistress, could but catch some of the sacred fire. Ignorant as she was, and angry as she had at times been, and sore as she even now felt at the teachings and preachings which had brought her master to prison, and were leading him on, as it seemed, to a shameful end, and which had deprived her mistress and herself of all the comforts of a luxurious home, and driven them to take shelter in one mean dwelling after another— even Ursel, on parting with the aged hostess that night, to share with her young mistress the widow's own chamber, which was given up to them, embraced her heartily, and begged to be remembered by her in her prayers.

The following morning found the whole household early astir, and commencing the labours of the day with illegal devotions,—illegal, because it was the performance of religious worship in a private house,—and then they separated; the widow's two lads, Kloos and Galeyn, departing to the factory in which they had obtained employment. Later in the

morning Nina, accompanied by the widow, bent her steps to the house of a magistrate near the Vrydags Markt, who was reported to be secretly favourable to the Reformed, and from whom it was hoped that Nina might obtain permission to visit her father.

There was little difficulty in obtaining audience of this magnate, although, on hearing their errand, he shook his head gravely and portentously.

"Were the prisoner a thief, or a rogue and vagabond, or even a murderer," said he, "there would be little difficulty in the matter—but a heretic! That is another affair altogether, I promise you." Then, seeing the discouraging effect produced by these words on the meek and patient and pallid countenance of the young suppliant, he added, "But rest you here till I see what may be done,—or rather, not here, but follow me into my house;"—for he had received them in a small room fitted up, as it seemed, to serve the purpose either of a magistrate's office or a merchant's counting-house. Himself explaining this, and volunteering the information that he dealt largely in groceries of various kinds, and that trade was very different from what it formerly had been, because of the troubles that were abroad, he led his two visitors through large and lofty warehouses piled with bales and boxes, then ascended a flight of stairs to an upper story, where, opening a door, he introduced the widow and Nina to two gentle-looking ladies, who were seated at needlework in a handsome apartment near to an open window, looking down upon one of the principal streets of the city.

A few whispered words to the elder of these ladies called up on her comely countenance a pitying expression, which was intensified and combined with admiration, when she had looked steadily for a moment at the younger of the visitors. Rising from her seat with alacrity, this lady approached Nina,

and bestowed upon her a loving and maternal caress, whispering in her ear to be of good comfort. Then she turned to the widow with a smile of recognition, saying, "We have met before."

And so indeed they had; though the poor vrouw Van Muler little knew or thought that the carefully muffled and coarsely clad stranger, whom she had many times met at the private meetings of the Protestants in various parts of the city—when a price would have been set on every worshipper, had a discovery been made of their proceedings,—and the wife of the rich merchant and burgomaster Lippershay, were one and the same person.

There was no time, however, had this been the right occasion, for expressing surprise at this discovery; for, without further waiting, the lady led her guests to the younger female, whom she introduced as her daughter, and who appeared to be about the age of Nina, by the name of Paulina.

There is a freemasonry in youth, and loveliness of disposition, and gentleness of breeding, which none can understand or enter into but those who possess those qualifications. These two young persons, however, did possess them, and ere many minutes had passed away they understood each other better than two others of an opposite temperament would have done after an acquaintance of as many days, or even weeks. And while the lady of the house and her widowed visitor were seated together, conversing in low tone and serious, on matters connected with what the poor widow was glad to find was of common interest with them, widely apart as were their outward circumstances, the two young women were equally disposed to mutual confidence. In a short time Nina had spoken of her home in Antwerp, now her home no longer, —of her sisters, happily escaped from the storm of persecution, —of her dear sweet cousin Lysken (of whom Paulina had

heard),—and last, but not least, of her errand in Ghent, and her imprisoned father.

"And think you," she asked, when she saw that her new friend's eyes were glistening with sympathy, "that your father will be able to procure my admission to the prison?"

"Never fear, Nina," said the other. "My father is often compelled to put on a stern look, and to speak hard words; yet, believe me, there is not a kinder heart in all Ghent than is his. You would believe me, did you know one half the good deeds which I know he does in private; and I know but a small part of them. But we will not talk of this, and as it may be some time ere he returns, you shall see my flowers."

Nina had already had time to look round the apartment in which they were seated, and to observe the various appliances for comfort and luxury with which it was ornamented. Those were days, indeed, in which many things that would now be deemed luxurious were uninvented; but probably there was not a country in Europe in which comfort was more generally appreciated than in Holland and the neighbouring states. And the riches which successful and widespread commerce had for many years poured into the coffers of the merchant-princes of those countries had largely encouraged the taste for embellishment and display, which were so manifest to all observers.

The merchant Baldwin Lippershay had not escaped the almost universal contagion of this household extravagance. Pictures, tapestry, rich carpets, china ornaments, heavy and costly furniture, proclaimed alike his wealth and his taste, and also reminded Nina of her lost home. Above all else, however, his flowers were his choice treasures. The tulipomania, which in the seventeenth century made Holland and the Netherlands so famous in the chronicles of gambling, had not indeed

broken out in the time of our narrative; but its germ, though unseen and unsuspected, was in the inordinate love even then lavished upon rare specimens of both native and foreign flowers.

"You shall see my flowers," said Paulina Lippershay, as she rose and led Nina by the hand into a conservatory into which the drawing-room opened.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

In Prison.

NINA had a tender loving regard for flowers. They had been her solace from childhood, and while her infirmities had debarred her from the active enjoyments of life and society, she had derived not only pleasure but profit from the cultivation and careful tending of the floral treasures with which, partly for her sake, her father's conservatory had been abundantly supplied. Now, however, her thoughts were too exclusively exercised with anxiety on her father's account, to pay much regard to the beauties of Flora with which she found herself surrounded; and after a little while her conversation with Paulina returned to the same channel from which it had momentarily been diverted.

This conversation was soon interrupted, however, by the return of Paulina's father, who had donned his official robe, and declared himself ready to accompany Nina to the prison where her father was confined. He had not been idle in the interval which had elapsed,—having himself gone to the

principal officer of the Inquisition in the city, and, with some difficulty, obtained an order for admission to the state prisoner.

"I can take but one visitor with me," he explained, as the widow Van Muler rose to accompany Nina; "you must therefore, vrouw, entrust your young friend with me, and wait here till our return. I will take care that she comes to no harm." Saying this, the good-natured burgomaster invited the weak girl—weak in body, but strong in mind and resolution—to take his arm; and thus supported, Nina passed out into the street, and was conducted to the prison.

The prison was at no great distance from the burgomaster's house, and no long time elapsed before Nina and her new and stout protector were within its strong, hard walls.

"See," said Baldwin Lippershay, as the two passed through an outer courtyard, leading to the governor's apartments; "is it not as I told you? These prisoners,"—pointing to a number of men who, within the limits of the high outer wall, were amusing themselves, or whiling away the time, in a variety of boyish games,—"these prisoners are but common malefactors awaiting their trial. Among them are swindlers, thieves, housebreakers, forgers, with here and there one under suspicion of being a murderer. These are allowed as much liberty as is consistent with safe keeping, and may see their friends when they will. But for such as your father there is no compassion and no indulgence, my poor child. Even his advocate has to pass through many forms, and is restricted in the number and length of his visits. It is best to tell you this now," added the burgomaster, "that you may be the less disturbed at any change you may perceive in your father."

"Has he been—is he, then—ill? Oh, I knew not that!" exclaimed Nina, piteously.

"Nay, I say not that; but close and solitary confinement

tells upon the hardiest; but cheer up, my child! let us hope that ere long your father may be restored to liberty and his brave young daughter."

"You spoke of his advocate, sir," continued Nina; "is he yet in Ghent?"

"I know not; but here we are at the governor's rooms. I will but speak to him and show him my authority for your admission, and return to you anon. Sit you here, dear child, the while," said the magistrate, tenderly, as he pointed to a stone bench close under the wall, and partly overshadowed by a sickly linden tree.

Obedient to his suggestion, Nina seated herself, and adjusted the deep veil so as to hide her face from the prying, curious glances of one and another of the wretched prisoners who had the liberty of the yard. She was glad of the slight repose thus granted to her, for at her first entrance within the prison walls her fortitude had nigh given way; and she needed, as she felt, to summon up all the strength of mind she possessed for the coming interview. Her father must not see that she was cast down with overmuch sorrow—so she argued; and though it was hard to simulate hopefulness where there were so few grounds for hope, he should see nothing in his daughter's bearing to add affliction to his bonds.

What could she do better than lift up her soul in secret ejaculatory prayer to Him who is able to deliver, and to help in every time of need? What so well? It is the privilege of every true child of God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, however humble or obscure, or down-trodden or down-hearted, to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that"—he or she—"may seek mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Nina knew this, and she believed it. She knew also where, in that replete treasury of petitions provided in the Old

Testament Psalms, for all heart-faint and tongue-locked souls, —to find the very prayer which then trembled in her heart— and thus her heart cried :—

"Let the sighing of the prisoner come before Thee! According to the greatness of Thy power, preserve Thou those that are appointed to die! And render unto our neighbours seven-fold into their bosom, their reproach wherewith they have reproached Thee, O Lord! So we, Thy people and sheep of Thy pasture, will give Thee thanks for ever; we will show forth Thy praise to all generations."

"Methinks this little rest has revived you, my child," said the burgomaster, in his pleasant fatherly voice, when he rejoined Nina, and had glanced for a moment at her countenance when she raised her veil.

"I feel much stronger, sir," said Nina.

"That is well. And now our friend the governor will conduct us to your father." The magistrate waved his hand as he spoke to a grave and saturnine official in military uniform, who, on being thus alluded to, bowed courteously to Nina.

"I am grieved," said he, "that my instructions limit your interview with the prisoner to half an hour."

"Short time, short time, that!" said the burgomaster; "there was a time when we magistrates had the ordering of these things; but times are changed, it seems."

"It is a very short time, sir," said Nina, meekly.

"I am sorry," said the official; "but it is as much as my place is worth to disobey the orders of my superiors."

"Well, lead on, sir," said the honest burgomaster, with a dissatisfied groan.

And the three passed under the gloomy and forbidding archway of the old prison house. There was an unlocking

of doors, a grating of iron bolts, a creaking of rusty hinges. Their feet grew chilly cold by treading on the damp stone paving of numerous corridors; and their footsteps echoed in the groined arches beyond and above. They descended many steps, the atmosphere becoming murkier, and the light dimmer as they went on. With a slight stretch of imagination, it might have been called the dark valley of the shadow of death; for to how many had it, in fact, been the last passage on earth? Happily, Nina did not think of this; her father was all she could think of then; and presently she was ushered into a dark cell, and in another instant was in her father's arms.

No very long time had elapsed since she saw him last. Not a month ago, she sadly remembered, he and she were in their own home, rejoicing in the thought of a speedy departure from the unhappy country which had become a very Aceldama—a field of blood. Later still she had bidden him a sorrowful adieu in the prison of her native city; and yet, in the short space of time which had intervened, how great a change had passed over him!

"Father, dear father!" she cried, as she clung to him, and laid her throbbing head on his dear breast.

And yet she was the first to recover sufficient composure to speak calmly and collectedly.

"I am not come to shed tears, father," she said, "but to receive your commands. Tell me, what more can I do?"

"You can do nothing more, dear Nina," said the captive, gently smoothing down her soft hair, and kissing her forehead again and again. "Nothing more," he added, "but to take care of your health, and to cast your care on Him who careth for you. All will be well in the end, my Nina."

"I am sure of that, father," said Nina, firmly, though somewhat mournfully.

NINA'S INTERVIEW WITH HER FATHER.

"You think that the end may be far off, and that the night may yet be darker before morning dawns?"

"I fear so, father,—oh, dear father!" and once more Nina's courage was on the brink of giving way, as she looked up into his sickly, pallid face, and around on the damp, dark stone walls of the dungeon.

"Look up higher, still higher, Nina," said the prisoner, smiling encouragingly. "There is heaven above all. It is only here, around our poor, mean world, that clouds gather. Heaven is above the clouds, my darling."

"I know it, father, and yet——"

"And you have done excellently well, my Nina," he went on; "you could not have done better than in sending to me our good friend from Leyden——"

"Oh, I had forgotten for the moment, father," cried Nina; eagerly adding, "Is he now in Ghent?"

"He left me yesterday; he is now in Antwerp, and he thinks and hopes — but I hardly dare to raise your expectations."

"Nay, tell me. I can bear to hear good news, believe me."

"I am not sure that the news is good, save that all is good which God sends. But he says that the charges against me are slight, while some evidences in my favour, which, however, I think too slight a foundation to build upon, may procure my acquittal, and restore me to my family."

"Does he say this, father? Then I will believe it. And the—the trial—when will that be?"

"I cannot say, Nina."

"Will it be in open court?" she asked, timidly.

"Were I accused of murder, it would undoubtedly be in open court; but you forget, Nina, I am a prisoner of the Inquisition."

In hurried speech like this on either side, the half-hour

was soon exhausted; and fondly embracing each other, the father and daughter parted, not knowing when, if ever on earth, they might be permitted to meet again. And many such meetings and partings were witnessed in that unhappy land in those days.

Burgomaster Lippershay benevolently abstained from interrupting the thoughts of the maiden as they passed from the prison to his house; and arriving there he would fain have administered a cordial which he pronounced to be most effectual in raising the dejected spirits of mourners. She declined this, however, with many thanks, while she found a more genial cordial in the sympathy and love of the burgomaster's lady and their fair daughter.

"I have been telling our good friend," said the former, speaking of the vrouw Van Muler, "that she, in her small abode (though her heart is large enough), must be inconvenienced by entertaining you and your old servant,—nay, do not reply," she said, with a kindly gesture, "for it is all arranged,—is it not, Paulina?"

"Indeed it is," said the young lady; "and you are to be my dear companion and friend, if you will." The kindness was unexpected; indeed, there was more than simple kindness, for some risk might be involved in receiving as an inmate the daughter of one who was accused of heresy. Yet, after all, it was perhaps the best that could have happened to Nina; for the present resources were not boundless by any means, and as she was determined not to quit Ghent until after her father's fate was determined, and no one could judge how long his trial might be delayed. Added to these considerations was another. In the house of the burgomaster, Nina would be assured of those attentions which it was utterly out of the power of her humble friend to give, however strong

her disposition to generous kindness; and she would have the solace of such society as she had all her life been accustomed to, but from which under the widow's roof she would necessarily be shut out. It was not with Nina, however, but with her friend, that this consideration had weight.

"I see that you both consent," said the burgomaster's wife; "remain therefore with us now; and as we deal with you, my dear child, may God deal with us."

"Let it be so," said the weeping Van Muler, as she embraced the still undecided girl; "and I will bring Ursel with me in the afternoon."

And so it was settled; and in the after part of the day, Nina was rejoined by her faithful old attendant, who rejoiced that her pet was once more in what she would have called her right and proper station. It should be added also that the burgomaster was so well satisfied with the plans which his wife and daughter had laid without his concurrence, that on hearing of Jan, as the self-constituted body-guard of Nina, he sent for him, and gave him some light employment in his warehouses, such as he had previously been accustomed to,—in order that he might be near his young mistress.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Aunt Philippa's Penitence.

OUR readers will not have forgotten the Beguinage, and the nun Margaret in her convent cottage; and to this quiet retreat we must now betake ourselves.

It was several weeks after the incidents recorded in the preceding chapter, that as Margaret was about to close her outer door for the night, she was alarmed by the sight of two persons on its threshold. It was some time after sunset, but the full moon had risen, and lighted up the neat gardens and picturesque gabled dwellings around them, while it cast the shadows of the two intruders far across the enclosure.

By this light, Margaret perceived that one of these intruders was in the ordinary costume of a Spanish soldier, for the moonbeams glistened on the embroidery of his coat, his steel scabbard and helmet; while his companion was a woman, thickly muffled, so that scarcely any portion of her countenance was visible.

"You know me not, mother," said the soldier, in a guarded tone, as he perceived the affright he had given; "but be

sure no harm is intended you. Peace be within this house! May we enter, mother?"

The nun silently made way; and then, when the door was carefully closed, the soldier removed his casque, and disclosed to the agitated woman,—her own son Guy, the proscribed heretic.

"Guy, Guy, I knew thee not in this disguise," she said, after she had tenderly embraced him with many tears.

"It is well that it is so complete," said he; "it has stood me in good stead many times ere now, and may again, if God will. But guess you my errand now?"

The Beguine looked at the muffled female, who had withdrawn to some little distance from the mother and son, and had, as it seemed from weariness, seated herself until the first greetings should be over. It was a strange look of suspicion and renewed alarm which the nun bestowed upon this uninvited guest, as she drew her son somewhat more aside, and whispered in his ear:

"Thou hast not done as the monk Luther did, when he threw off the pope and became a Reformer? Thou hast not done this, Guy? That woman is not thy wife?"

The ex-monk smiled. "Dismiss your fears, mother," he said, in the same low tone; "this is not the time to speak, or even to think of such matters; but rest you content: I am not married." Then he added, in a more cheerful and natural voice:—"This lady is Madam Philippa, wife's sister of the great merchant, Floris Franck of Antwerp, whom you have now in your prison at Ghent. The good lady wishes to be near her brother, in his sorrow and peril; and I ask you, in God's name, mother, to give her refuge."

"Ay, will I," said the Beguine, cheerfully and with alacrity, as she hastened, with like speed, to embrace the stranger, and to help remove the wrapping she had worn in travelling.

A great change had passed over the Aunt Philippa of our former chapters in the short time which had elapsed since we there met with her. The discipline of severe outward trial, but more especially the severity of mental and spiritual conflict, had subdued the haughtiness of her demeanour, while it had, at the same time, laid low the loftiness of her imaginations. And perhaps it will be as convenient here, as elsewhere, to sketch, *currente calamo*, with a rapid pen, the course of events in which this lady was concerned, while we have been necessarily engaged with the important affairs of her niece Nina.

In the solitude of her own chamber, after the departure of her niece, the unhappy woman at first gave herself up to the reproaches of her conscience. She had, in her blind and personal spite against one whom she disliked, brought distress, if not ruin upon those whom she loved, and placed one of these in imminent peril of martyrdom. It added to her remorse that her dislike to the pastor Junius (who had escaped her malice) was founded on personal pique rather than on a sense of religious duty; for she had even then become half-convinced, though sorely against her will, that truth and justice were on the side of the Reformers.

As days and weeks wore on, Mistress Philippa regained some degree of composure,—enough to enable her to reason, somewhat calmly, on the course she had taken, and to give herself to an examination of questions which theretofore she had too readily taken for granted. In the course of this investigation, she accidentally—as it seemed to her—lighted on the paper which had once been put into her hand by one of her brother's guests,—the ex-monk, Guy Regis, with whom she had afterwards become better acquained after the fatal fight and flight of Ostrawell, and the disturbances in Antwerp.

Nothing could have been more opportune. She had no

quarrel with that man, save on the score of his apostasy, as she once would have termed his conversion to Protestantism; and now, her better judgment told her that, so far from embracing new and erroneous doctrines, he, and those who believed with him, were but returning to the old paths and the good way, that they might walk therein.

The more Mistress Philippa pondered, the more was she convinced of this; and yet, with the perversity which sometimes attaches to those of her sex who are proud in being thought and called "strong-minded"—she had an almost invincible repugnance to acknowledge, even to herself, that she could ever have been wrong or mistaken.

While in this unhappy state of mind, and almost deserted by the few friends whom she had known, but who now avoided a house virtually in the hands of the Inquisition; when, indeed, she knew not how soon her own tolerated abode there might be terminated; and while, added to all this, her heart was racked by apprehensions respecting her brother and her niece, of neither of whom had recent tidings reached her; —just at this time the sole servant who had been left to wait upon her one evening put a scrap of paper into her hand, on which were a few words written.

"Whence got you this?" asked the dame, quickly, and in agitation.

"The person who gave it to me is even now waiting an answer in the wood-shed in the yard," said the girl.

Mistress Philippa uttered a hasty exclamation,—"He will be seen by the spies in this house, Marie. But know you who the man is?" she asked, yet more hastily, as though she would fain have covered her agitation with a veil of indifference.

"Yes, my lady. He has soldier's clothes on; but I know him to be the good minister who so often came here before my poor master was taken away."

"Ha!—methinks by your way that you are one of his secret disciples," said the lady, sharply.

"I know not, madam, whether I be or no," replied the girl; "but is it your pleasure to give the poor man the hearing for which he asks?"

"What shall I do, girl? He tells me here on this paper that he brings me tidings of my brother and my niece."

"I would see him, were I you," said Marie, promptly.

"But were he to come into the house—think of the danger!"

"I will bring him up by the back stairs, lady. I have the pass key in my pocket; and the Inquisition men below will be none the wiser. They are sharp and clever, but they know not everything," said the girl; adding, that there would be more danger of his being found in the wood-shed than in her lady's own room.

This argument prevailed; and Guy Regis was admitted. This was the first of many secret interviews he held with Madam Philippa, all in presence of Marie, who was worthily taken into their confidence; and the officers of the Inquisition in the other part of the large mansion little dreamt that beneath the roof which sheltered them, the doctrines of the Reformation, or rather of the gospel, were being, from time to time, plainly set forth by one of the proscribed ministers of the prohibited faith, and eagerly listened to by a pair of silly women, as Marie and her mistress would have been called.

From this pretended Spanish soldier did Madam Philippa obtain occasional information also respecting her brother and niece, through the wide-spread ramifications of secret intelligence to which the leaders of the persecuted Protestants were compelled to resort. By these means, the almost converted lady was made aware of the strictness of the prisoner's incarceration at Ghent, and of Nina having found an asylum in the house of the benevolent burgomaster.

We have just written, "the almost converted lady," because it is one thing for the judgment to be convinced, and another for the soul to be brought into subjection to the humbling doctrines of the gospel. Madam Philippa had, by this time, experienced the former change; but there was probably yet lacking the one thing without which all besides is of little avail.

Leaving this, however, the lady's anxiety to be near her brother and niece, and to seek assurance of forgiveness for the mischief she had wrought, determined her to abandon her present uncertain home, and reside in Ghent until after her brother's trial. And she was the more moved to this that she might avoid the pertinacity of her Romish father confessor, who was ever seeking to entrap her into some unguarded admission respecting the religious practices of Floris Franck, which she was well aware would be used against him in his approaching trial.

It was a matter of no difficulty for her to remove herself and her chattels to a small dwelling in the outskirts of the city, as an encumbrance was thus disposed of, and full possession of the merchant's house was thus obtained by his enemies. It was more difficult for a female in those unsettled and suspicious times to adventure on an overland journey, even of a few miles, without a sufficient guard, if not state permission. This, however, by the help of Guy Regis, and his borrowed uniform, was safely accomplished—the lady riding on a pillion behind the guard and guide, on a strong Flemish horse, borrowed for the occasion; and thus we have seen how and why the nun Margaret was called upon to show hospitality to a stranger.

It should also be explained, in passing, that the garb of a Spanish soldier was at that time a sufficient guarantee (so long as the wearer was unsuspected) for security in travelling;

for were not Spanish soldiers masters then in that unhappy land?

The simple-hearted Beguine nun did not require so full an explanation of foregone events as we have felt it needful to give for the satisfaction of our readers. It was enough that her Christian charity was evoked for a sister in distress; and after having placed refreshments before her guest, and pressed her to partake of them, she conducted her to a neat chamber, till then unoccupied, in the upper part of her cottage, and, commending her to the protection of Heaven, left her to her repose.

Until long after midnight, the mother and son sat in close communion in the little tiled parlour of the cottage; then, as the moon was declining westward, Guy Regis passed through the convent wicket gate without disturbing the portress, and was lost to his mother's sight.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Tribunal of Blood.

E shall not detain the reader by describing at large the meeting of Madam Philippa and her niece on the day following the arrival of the former in Ghent. It is sufficient to say that, subdued in spirit by sorrow and anxious care and remorse, the elder lady had never appeared to so great advantage in the eyes of the gentle Nina; and the reconciliation was not only genuine, but complete.

"It will all be well, aunt; all things will work, and are working, together for good," said the younger one.

"But if your dear father should perish by my baseness?" sobbed the elder lady.

"Even then, aunt—yes, even then, all will be well in the end." It required strong faith and strong effort in Nina to say this; but her faith had been strengthened by trial. Then she added: "But I will not think this. Master Merula gives great hope that my father will win through his trial, and come forth triumphantly; and so also says Baldwin Lippershay."

"And dear Floris—your father, Nina?"

"He says that he is in God's hands; and whether it be life or death, it will be for God's glory. Oh! aunt, would that you could see and hear him!"

"Is he much worn down with this imprisonment and long waiting?"

"He is wonderfully supported, aunt," said Nina.

"Have you seen him often?"

"Only once in every week," said Nina, sadly; "and then but for half an hour. He is permitted but one visitor at such times."

"I would that I might see him," said the elder lady.

"You shall take my place to-morrow, aunt, and I will wait another week," said Nina, yet not without a struggle very painful to be endured.

This conversation took place in the house of the burgomaster, Lippershay, to which Madam Philippa had been conducted by the youth Ulric, previously mentioned in these pages. At the close of the interview, and when Nina had introduced her aunt to the ladies of the mansion, the burgomaster's wife courteously invited the visitor to share with Nina in her husband's hospitality. The house was large enough, she said, and she hoped their hearts were large enough also; and, in short, a favour would be conferred upon them if Madam Philippa would consent to be their guest. The invitation, however, was declined with equal courtesy, and the sorrowing woman went back to her humble lodgings in the Beguinage, to return again on the morrow, when, under the protection of the magistrate, she visited her brother in his prison-house. It wanted but this, under Divine grace, to complete the work already commenced. There is a sorrow—the sorrow of the world—which worketh death; but, blessed be God, there is also a sorrow not of the world, but a godly

sorrow, which worketh repentance unto life, not to be repented of. So it was with this distressed lady, who, if she entered the prison-walls almost persuaded to renounce the last tatters of the creed which yet hung about her, returned with a full determination, in the strength of God, and with His help, to take henceforth His Word for her directory, and to seek His Spirit's teaching, and that alone.

Other visits to the prison, and more frequent intercourse with her niece and the burgomaster's family, and yet more constant intercommunion with the simple but pious Beguine, confirmed Madam Philippa in her new and scriptural views of religion. We must not linger over this part of our history, however.

Other weeks and even months passed away, and Floris Franck was still a prisoner of the Inquisition. Doubtless he would have been brought to a more speedy trial, had evidence been forthcoming sufficient to condemn him : for unscrupulous as were the enemies of the Reformation, there were at least some forms to be observed in the trial of heretics. And Floris Franck had been of such good repute, and was held in such high respect in Antwerp, that those who knew of his religious doings which were contrary to law, kept their knowledge to themselves, not caring to testify against him. Even the servants of his household, who might have given evidence of religious worship having been performed under his roof by heretic teachers and preachers, held their peace. Much had been expected from the testimony of his sister-in-law, who had been the means of his arrest ; but, as we have seen, this anticipation signally failed. Even the fact (which was well known) that the merchant had transported the greater part of his effects to England, intending to follow, could scarcely be looked upon as a crime, since there was no law against this kind of self-

banishment; and hundreds of families had on various accounts left the country in like manner, subjecting themselves to all the inconveniences of a sojourn in foreign lands, without incurring the suspicion of treason, or even of heresy. Happily, Floris Franck's secret understanding with the Prince of Orange, and the letters which had passed between them, were matters concealed in his own breast.

So, at last, failing in procuring more evidence than they already had obtained, namely, that the prisoner was gravely suspected of heretical practices contrary to law, and knowing that strong and adverse feelings had already been excited against them, on account of his long detention in prison, and being also urged on to action by remonstrances of the prisoner's advocate at law—the board of inquisitors (or by whatever other name they might be called) proceeded reluctantly to bring Floris Franck to their "bloody tribunal," by which name their court was popularly known.

It was pitiful to see, when the prisoner was brought into open court and broad daylight, what ravages had been made by the harsh treatment he had received in prison. The stout upright form of Floris Franck had become attenuated and bowed, so that his garments hung loosely upon him. His once florid complexion had changed into a death-like pallor, tinged with an unearthly yellowness. His hair, formerly dark, was plentifully streaked with grey; and his sight—so long accustomed to the gloom of his prison cell—was blinded by excess of light, as he was conducted into the court, so that he stumbled and almost fell ere he could regain his footing.

All this was seen by Nina, who could not be persuaded to remain in the burgomaster's house during the trial of her father.

"Do not hinder me, dear friends," she had said, pathetically pleading with the burgomaster's wife and daughter when they

would have dissuaded her; adding, "I will go; and if he be to die, I will die with him."

So, under the protection of Baldwin Lippershay, the maiden entered the court, and took her seat by his side.

It would have been more than she could have borne, to see her father so changed from what he once had been, had she not been partly accustomed to the alteration in her weekly visits to the prison; and it was a sore and heavy trial to her when she saw him placed as a criminal at the bar of human law and justice. "Law and justice!" No, no; for "law was perverted, judgment was turned away backward, justice stood afar off, pity was in a deep swoon, truth had fallen in the street, and equity could not enter. Yea, truth had failed; and he that departed from evil had made himself a prey." Nina knew this—knew that hundreds as guiltless as her father had borne the same reproach and suffered similar ignominy. But one thought sustained her. "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household?" Nina knew whose words these were, and where it is said, for the encouragement of all under persecution for righteousness' sake,—"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Calmly, then—with a calmness far transcending that of some heroines of old of whom she had read in ancient story, did Nina, while lifting up her heart to God—to God, who could perform all things for her father and herself—prepare her mind for the scene to be enacted in her presence.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Trial and Escape.

THE record against the prisoner set forth that he, in rebellion against the sovereign ruler of the Netherlands, had contumaciously disobeyed and set at nought the edict of the 14th of May, 1567. In brief, the terms of the edict were these :—.

Firstly. All ministers and teachers of the so-called Reformed doctrines were sentenced to the gallows.

Secondly. All persons who had suffered their houses to be used for religious purposes were sentenced to the gallows.

Thirdly. All parents or masters, whose children or servants had attended such meetings were sentenced to the gallows ;—the servants and children thus offending to be beaten with rods.

Fourthly. All people who sang hymns at the burial of their relations were sentenced to the gallows.

Fifthly. Parents who allowed their newly-born children to be baptized by other hands than those of the Catholic priest

BEFORE THE INQUISITORS.

were sentenced to the gallows. And the same punishment was denounced against the persons who should christen the child, or act as its sponsors.

Sixthly. Schoolmasters who should teach any error or false doctrine were sentenced to the gallows.

Seventhly. Those who infringed the statute against the buying and selling of religious books and songs were, after the first offence proved, sentenced to the gallows.

Eighthly. All who sneered at, or otherwise insulted any ecclesiastic of the Catholic Church, were sentenced to the gallows.

Ninthly. All vagabonds, fugitives, apostates, and runaway monks, were ordered forthwith to depart from every city, on pain of death.

Finally. In all these cases, confiscation of the whole property of the criminal was to be added to the sentence of death.

Called upon to plead to the accusation of having infringed this edict, the prisoner quietly and respectfully replied to the Chief Inquisitor, that the greater number of the charges contained in the edict could have no application to himself—he being neither a vagabond, nor fugitive, nor apostate, nor runaway monk, nor a minister or teacher, nor a schoolmaster, but a peaceable merchant and citizen of Antwerp, as was well known by the burgomasters and others of that city, some of whom were ready to give evidence to that effect. Furthermore, his children, as could be shown by church registers, had been, in their infancy, baptized by no other hands than those of the Catholic priests. That he and his children had attended Protestant meetings for religious services, the prisoner admitted; but it was during the time of the Accord, when liberty of worship, according to the Reformed doctrines, was

permitted and legalized by the Duchess of Parma, as regent for the king. This, therefore, could be accounted no crime. With regard to having received heretical teachers into his house, he had only to say that, as a merchant, engaged in commerce, his house was the resort of great numbers of people on various matters of business; and it was no part of his duty to inquire into their religion, and that if such teachers had visited him, they must have been in the ordinary costume of men engaged in the lawful business of life; and their disguise was a matter for which he held himself not answerable. Lastly, as regarded religious worship, he presumed that the law just quoted was not intended to prevent peaceable citizens from praying to God, since the Catholic Church required such prayers to be offered, and had prepared forms for the aid of such as needed them. And if his worship went beyond that, it was for the court to establish this fact by good evidence, and mercifully to instruct him as to wherein he had done wrong, that he might do so no more.

Having thus meekly defended himself, the prisoner bowed respectfully, and humbly asked permission to be seated, his weakness being such that his legs would scarcely sustain him. This favour was granted him, as also that his advocate at law might be seated near him, the proceedings of the Inquisition not being then so strict in Holland, it would appear, as elsewhere. Then there was much whispering among the judges, five in number, and presently the president of the tribunal demanded of the prisoner to say whether the proscribed heretic minister Franciscus Junius had not frequently been harboured by him.

And hereupon the advocate Merula rose, and declared that it was contrary to law and justice to question a prisoner respecting a matter of which he was accused, nor should he consent to his client answering either yea or nay. It was, he

said, for the prisoner's prosecutors to prove, if they were able, the things of which they had accused him ; and if they failed in this, his client was entitled to be set at liberty. He boldly added, that many innocent persons, as was well known, had, in their eagerness to clear themselves, hastily, but in good faith and honesty, answered questions thus put to them, which answers were afterwards twisted to their destruction. And, with his good will, the honourable merchant before the court should not be thus entrapped.

The president looked darkly on the advocate. "You are over zealous, sir," said he; "but take your course now. There will be enough, I fancy, to condemn your honourable merchant, as you call the prisoner, without his own confession. Let the witnesses be called."

There were those present who marvelled as much at the judge's compliance as at the advocate's boldness. There were others, however, who knew that, even in those darkest days of spiritual despotism and illegal tyranny, there was a spirit in the people not altogether crushed ; and that those who were the willing instruments of that tyrannical despotism had at times to go warily to work, and to pay some kind of outward deference to those who stood up in defence of the indefeasible rights of the citizens of what had once been a free country.

So certain witnesses were brought forward to prove they knew not what against the prisoner. They so contradicted each other, however, and were so skilfully cross-examined by the prisoner's advocate, that though suspicion might be strengthened as to the misdoings (the misdoings, forsooth !) of the prisoner, nothing had been proved against him.

It was for the prisoner's advocate to rebut those suspicions if he could. This he did by witnesses, who had been brought from Antwerp.

First came forward one, and another, and another, who

soothly declared themselves to have been for many years neighbours of Floris Franck, and had known nothing of him inconsistent with true loyalty. They testified also to many deeds by which he had shown himself a true friend to his country and his countrymen. These witnesses being persons of known character, and of undoubted orthodoxy as regarded the Catholic Church, their evidence was unimpeachable.

Next came two burgomasters of the city of Antwerp, who gave evidence respecting the zeal manifested by Floris Franck in restraining the fury of the mob when it broke out against images, and when the Cathedral Church at Antwerp was sacked, and all the images in it destroyed. They averred that the merchant then did good service to the Church, even at the hazard of his own safety and even life, in that by his personal efforts he withstood the violence which was being wrought, and prevented other mischiefs, which would otherwise have followed.

The evidence of these two grave citizens was not without influence in the court. The judges again turned to each other, and all, save one, put on more placable countenances. A few more questions were then put to the witnesses; but these only brought out in more distinct features the good deeds of the prisoner on that eventful day.

"Have you any other witnesses to produce?" asked the president of the advocate, when the burgomasters were dismissed.

Yes, one more; for at a motion from the advocate came tottering forward an aged priest, bearing in his arms a mysterious case or package, which he reverently placed before him on the table, eyeing it with much affectionate regard the while.

What had he to say? the old priest was asked.

He had this to say:—his name was Adrian, a monk of

St. Dominic, as was well known by many in Antwerp. He had been confessor to the prisoner's—the burgher Franck's—deceased wife, and thus well knew the prisoner also. He had this more to say, that the burden he bore was the precious relic of a dead saint, even a bone of his body, which was enshrined in a case of sandal-wood, inlaid with silver and gold, of which priceless treasure he, Father Adrian, was the sole custodian. Would their mightinesses the judges be pleased to look upon the marvel-working relic?

"Another time, another time, good father," said the president, somewhat impatiently. "Go on now with your evidence for the prisoner, if you have aught to tell."

He had this more to tell:—that on the night of that sacrilegious image-breaking, being in deadly peril of losing that which he valued more than his life, and being, as he verily believed, pursued by those who would have robbed him of his treasure, he took refuge in the house of burgher Franck, who not only gave him friendly shelter, but also placed in all security and honour the relic that he bore,—keeping both it and him with generous hospitality till the danger had passed away,—in proof of which he once more tendered a sight of the blessed bone to the inquisitors, who, again declining for that time the privilege, demanded of the advocate if he had any farther witnesses to call.

"I had other witness; but I will let my client's case rest where it now stands," said Merula, who had keenness enough to perceive the impression made by the last witness. A buzz of approbation from the body of the court followed this declaration; and then a death-like silence fell upon all present, while the judges consulted together.

Was it to be life or death? No wonder if Nina's heart beat rapidly; but her heart was lifted up to God, and endurance was given.

The consultation of the judges was painfully protracted. It seemed as though they differed as to the verdict they should give. There was one of them at least who appeared to be standing out against his compeers ; and those who were nearest the tribunal plainly heard him impatiently uttering the dread doom of condemnation, conveyed in the well-known and understood words, "ad patibulum" (to the gallows!).

This sentence of death, however, evidently did not meet the concurrence of three of his fellow judges ; and it was noticed, after more whispering, that the dissentient presently threw himself back in his seat passionately, and took no further part in the whispered conference.

When this was over, the president employed himself for some time in writing down in a book before him the minutes probably of the decision of the court, and then in an impressive tone he addressed the prisoner,—first of all recapitulating the charges which had been brought against him, —charges involving the gravest criminality and treason against the government both in Church and State. He went on to declare that these charges, being proved, could be only atoned for by death. For his own part, he added, he saw no reason to doubt the accuracy and justice of the accusations made ; but as the decision did not rest with himself alone, and as the majority of the judges had determined that many of those accusations remained unproved, and as it had been shown by credible witnesses that the prisoner had on some occasions done service to religion,—the court had determined to exercise its privilege of mercy. "You are therefore," he added, "acquitted of these present charges, and are discharged from prison."

He ceased speaking, and at the same instant a shrill cry from one among the audience smote painfully on the ears of all present and threw the court into momentary confusion.

The cry was Nina's. She who had so long bravely borne sorrow and care and anxious doubt, and had looked forward, as she thought, with strong reliance on her God and Saviour, to her father's condemnation,—if so it should be ordered,—was at length overcome by joy at his deliverance. At the words, "acquitted, and discharged from prison," Nina's strength gave way. There was that one hysterical cry, and then she fainted, and would have fallen to the floor, but for the strong arm of the burgomaster Lippershay which sustained her.

Several days later in the course of time, and late in the evening, some of the principal persons of our narrative were assembled in the well-lighted drawing-room of the burgomaster Lippershay. There were Floris Franck and his daughter Nina, both in some measure showing the effects of their late heavy trials, but serenely happy in their reunion. There was Aunt Philippa, subdued and humbled, yet rejoicing in the unexpected mercy of God in the deliverance of her brother-in-law. There stood also, in ordinary lay costume, the ex-monk Guy Regis beside his mother, the Beguine; and there too was the widow Van Muler, who had discovered that the burgomaster's lady had been for many years past secretly one of the best patronesses in the purchase, by deputy, of her finest and richest specimens of point-lace. By these kind and judicious purchases the lady had helped the poor lace-worker over many difficulties, and conferred a richer benefit than though she had advanced the same amount of ducatoons in mere charity. There also was our friend Jan, the one-armed sailor, who insisted on maintaining his post at the door of the apartment as porter; and there too, seated behind her young mistress, and in loving tendence on her, was nurse Ursel. The burgomaster, and his lady, and their daughter Paulina were there; and they all, as it seemed, were waiting

in expectation of some other arrival; for the burgomaster, after bustling out and in more than once, uttered some wondering exclamation that *he* had not yet arrived. Meanwhile conversation was carried on in quiet tones among the several groups into which the party was broken up.

The suspense, however, was presently ended by a slight movement without, and then by the entrance of the advocate Merula, between whom and those present warm greetings were interchanged. Then the advocate spoke, addressing Floris Franck.

"It is as I feared," he said, in a tone of abrupt decision. "The officers of the Inquisition at Antwerp refuse to give up your property. They have also forwarded a remonstrance to the Duke of Alva against your acquittal. A few more hours, and if they succeed, as they hope to do, you will once more be lodged in prison, your acquittal reversed, awaiting a new trial."

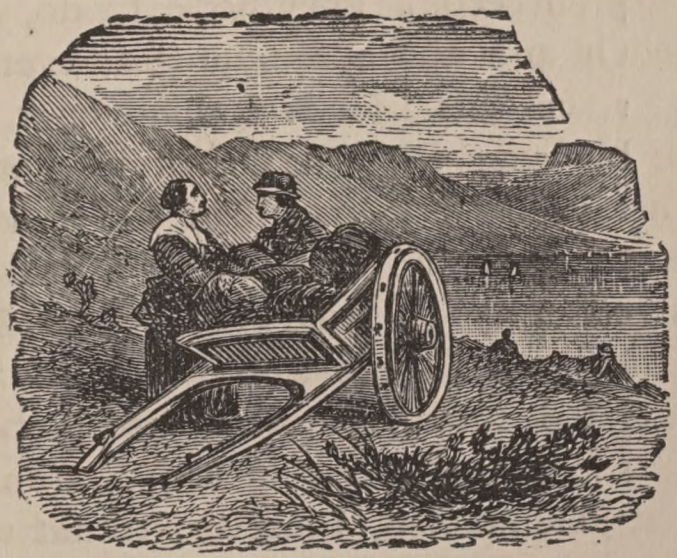
"It must be as God wills," said the merchant, resignedly. Nina turned her eyes tearfully from the advocate to her father, and then again to the advocate. No one else spoke.

"It is God's will that you should be delivered out of their hands!" exclaimed the generous burgomaster. "Listen:—it is but a short stage to Ostend,—there a vessel waits to convey you and yours to England. The means of transport to port are ready, and at your service. I foreboded that which we have just heard, and I laid my plans accordingly. Our friends here have been invited by me to bid you God-speed. I would only that the parting had been less sudden."

"But the cost of all this, sir——"

"We will speak of that another day, my friend," said Baldwin Lippershay. "Now we have but time to commend you and each other to the protection of God, who helps those who help themselves."

And so, with not many words spoken, the party knelt down in earnest prayer; and then, in the darkness of the night, they embraced and separated,—Floris Frank, his daughter, her aunt, and Ursel and Jan, with but few personal effects, mounting into a light wagon, which was to convey them to the port of Ostend; and the other guests quietly and stealthily returning to their homes on foot, through the deserted streets of Ghent.



CHAPTER XXXVII.

In England—News from Home.

WHILE the events we have recorded were in progress in the Netherlands, the Prince of Orange was a wanderer, and unable either to rescue his friends from danger, or to strike a blow for the liberties of his country. "Yet," says his historian, "he never allowed himself to despair; and in the darkest hours of calamity he was ever watchful. It was no longer his cause, but God's; and in God's good time, He would send help from His sanctuary."

Compelled, however, to acknowledge that, at that time, all open efforts for the deliverance of the Netherlands were likely to be fruitless, "the prince instinctively," we are told, "turned his eyes towards the more favourable aspect of the Reformation in France. It was inevitable," the historian goes on to say, "that while he was thus thrown for the time out of his legitimate employment, he should be led to the battles of freedom in a foreign land."

It does not enter into the scope of our narrative to describe

the exploits of the Protestant hero on behalf of the persecuted Huguenots; and we must pass on to observe that even while thus engaged, the prince kept up an extensive correspondence with leading persons in every part of the Netherlands. We may understand, therefore, that it was in consequence of his communications, and perhaps instructions, that Floris Franck had determined on proceeding to England, where, as was believed, he might be usefully employed in furthering the cause of the Reformation in his own country. At any rate, it is perfectly well known that the prince had friends and correspondents scattered throughout Europe; and even the conventional or disguising terms by which different circumstances and persons of importance were designated in these letters, are now matters of history. Thus, the prince himself "was always designated as Martin Willemzoon, the Duke of Alva as Master Powels van Albas, the Queen of England as Henry Philipzoon, and the King of Denmark as Peter Petersen. The twelve signs of the zodiac were also used instead of the twelve months, and a great variety of similar substitutions were adopted." The key to this enigmatical writing was in the hands of all the friends of his cause with whom the prince corresponded,—not only in the Provinces, but in France, England, Germany, and particularly in the great commercial cities.

From these items of history we turn to some of the personages of our narrative, whom we shall find domiciled in a pleasant house on the banks of the Thames, in or near the suburban village of Chelsea,—then separated from London by a broad expanse of marshy and almost uninhabited land, intersected by roads dangerous to unprotected and solitary travellers; and rarely traversed by those who could afford the pleasanter and safer mode of transport offered by the silent highway, as the Thames has been aptly named.

The attractions which this locality offered to Floris Franck and his family on his arrival in London are sufficiently obvious. There was no place near the English metropolis which bore so marked a resemblance to his beloved birth-land, as did the flats of Chelsea and the opposite district of Battersea. It needed only, in some moods, to call the Thames by the name of Scheldt, and the delusion was complete;—so, at least, thought Nina Franck, when, as was her frequent custom, she sat in a quiet garden-house, built on the very bank of the river, to which the grounds of her father's house extended, and watched the quiet rippling of the tide, which was only occasionally disturbed by the broad oars of sluggish barges, as they passed by in mid-stream; or when her sister and herself and old Ursel, with Jan for a steersman, sailed on summer evenings in a light skiff on those placid waters.

Another inducement for the ex-merchant of Antwerp to take up his abode at Chelsea, was its proximity to Westminster, with its courts of law and parliament. Acting as one of the agents of his prince in England, it was desirable that he should be in frequent correspondence with those English noblemen and statesmen who were friendly to the Protestant cause in the Netherlands. Not much, however, had as yet resulted from all the negotiations in which he had taken part. For more than a year, dating from his first arrival in London, after his narrow escape from the gallows in his own country, Floris Franck had been unceasingly engaged in endeavouring to enlist the sympathies of "the lady of the narrow seas," as Queen Elizabeth was sometimes termed, in favour of his Protestant countrymen; but with uncertain results. She was willing enough to give protection to all the Flemish exiles who took shelter in her dominions; for many of these were among the most industrious inhabitants of the Netherlands, and had rendered that country celebrated for

its arts: so that she reaped great advantage by introducing into England some useful manufactures which were formerly unknown there. But, at the same time, she adverted to the religious scruples which had produced the revolt of the Hollanders, in a tone of levity which it is difficult to understand her motive for assuming; since it could not fail to give extreme offence, not only to the suppliants for her help, but even to her own Protestant subjects. She said that it was unreasonable of the Dutch to have stirred up so great a commotion merely on account of the celebration of the mass; and that so contumacious a resistance to their king could never redound to their honour, since they were not compelled to believe in the divinity of the mass, but only to be spectators of its performance as a public spectacle. "What," said she, "if I were to begin to act some scene in a dress like this" (for she was clad in white, like a priest),—"should you regard it as a crime to behold it?" It is not to be supposed that a woman who could treat religious scruples thus lightly, could have much sympathy with the sufferers under religious persecution.

It was while these negotiations were going on, that letters from their old home reached the Flemish family at Chelsea, which filled them with sorrow. Among these letters was one especially, from Paul Merula, of Leyden, which, though addressed principally to his affianced Margaret, contained information which was common to all, and which we reproduce for the benefit of our English readers.

After dwelling at some length on the condition of the unhappy country, which was ground to powder between the upper and nether millstones of spiritual despotism and fiscal burdens, the writer proceeded thus:—

"One of the latest of those who have sealed with their blood the testimony of the Word, was our now sainted and

glorified brother, Guy Regis. It is marvellous, indeed, that he so long escaped the quest and malice of the Inquisition, seeing how bold he had been for the truth, and how earnest in making known the gospel of Christ's salvation. After numberless escapes, which were partly due to the facility with which he slipped on various disguises,—sometimes appearing as a priest, then as a beggar, afterwards as a herdsman or cattle driver, then as a pedlar or travelling merchant, and anon as a Spanish soldier,—he was captured near to Brussels, whence he was conveyed to Ghent—that city being the scene of what is called his apostacy; otherwise, of his marvellous deliverance from the darkness of popery, and his translation into the bright, clear sunlight of the Reformation. His trial before the blood tribunal speedily took place, and his condemnation still more quickly followed. But, instead of being sentenced to the gallows, according to the tenor of the latest edict, he was condemned to be burned, as a most notorious and daring rebel and heretic. This sentence was carried into execution in the market-place; but not until he had been cruelly tortured to compel him to confess the names of those who had harboured him, and assisted him in his various disguises. But the severest pains, as I am told, would draw from him only prayers for his tormentors, and expressions of fervent love towards God and His truth, and humble reliance on the merits and intercession of God's dear Son.

"On being led to the place of execution, his mouth was gagged, so that he might not pervert others in the hour of his death. But, ere the fire was lighted, the gag became loosened, and fell from his mouth, so that he was heard by those near to pray fervently to God for His gracious presence and help. Whereupon one in the crowd (it was a woman's voice) cried out:—'Fight manfully, dear brother; your sufferings will be soon ended.' Upon which, the martyr unbuttoned his vest,

THE MARTYRDOM OF GUY REGIS.

and showed his naked breast, all bloody and bruised with the tortures he had previously borne; and, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, 'I have already in my body the marks of Christ my Saviour.' And so presently the fire was lighted, and Guy Regis died in the flames. Search was afterwards made for the woman who had cheered him on; but she was hidden in the crowd. Yet there are those who knew that the voice was that of a poor lace-worker, whose husband was a former martyr, and who has a son a printer in Leyden.

"I have yet other heavy news to send you," the letter went on;—"your cousin Lysken and her husband, Kasper Arnoldzoon, are now in prison. It is a month since tidings were brought to Leyden that Kasper, who had been some weeks absent on one of his dangerous journeys, had fallen into the hands of the Inquisitors, near to the Brill, whither he was led as a prisoner. In his pack were found some of the pamphlets which he carried concealed under his lace and other merchandize; and on the evidence of these he was thrust into prison. On hearing this, his fond wife Lysken, who had but recently buried her only child, determined to go and comfort him; nor could all our persuasions prevail upon her to forego her resolution. So, after setting her house in order, and taking a tender farewell of her father, she departed, under the guardianship of Hans, the printer, who lodged in her house. A week later, he returned alone, having himself narrowly escaped from the grasp of the Inquisition,—only as nothing could be found against him, and especially as he was poor, he was allowed to go free. But as for your cousin, she was so closely questioned, and she so bravely declared her abhorrence of Romish doctrine, that she was forthwith placed in confinement in the common jail. And she now, with her husband, awaits her trial for heresy."

There was more in the advocate's letter; but that which

had been already read in the assembled family, amidst many tears and sobs, and exclamations of horror, prevented for the time any further knowledge of its contents. Afterwards, however, when they had spent some time in prayer, and had thus gained some degree of strength and composure of soul, they turned again to the letter, and gathered these further particulars:—first, that on the morning following the martyrdom of Guy Regis, his aged mother, the Beguine Margaret, not making her accustomed appearance at matins in the church, was sought for by one of the sisters, and was found on her bed, lifeless; the heavy sorrow of the previous day having, as was believed, so wrought upon her poor weak bodily frame as to cause her sudden dissolution. Yet a smile of peaceful tranquillity was seen on her death countenance; and by her side was an open New Testament—a French version—on which her hand rested, close under these words of the apostle:—

"Et quand ce corps corruptible aura été revêtu de l'incorruptibilité, et que ce corps mortel aura été revêtu de l'immortalité, alors cette parole de l'Ecriture sera accomplie: La mort est engloutie pour toujours. O mort où est ton aiguillon? O sépulcre où est ta victoire? Or, l'aiguillon de la mort, c'est le péché; et la puissance du péché, c'est la loi. Mais grâces à Dieu, qui nous a donné la victoire par notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ."[1]

The letter went on further to say that on the news of the capture and imprisonment of Lysken and her husband, Lysken's father fell into a deep maze of despondency amounting almost to childish terror, so that it was feared his intellect was touched; but that he had been partly revived by the kindness of the good pensionary of the city—one Paul Buys, who had procured for him, temporarily, the post of carilloneur

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 54–57.

in the church of St. Peter, and had in other ways interested himself in the old man's welfare.

The letter concluded with a faithful promise on the part of Paul Merula, that he would leave no stone unturned to procure the release (if such might be) of Lysken, and of her husband also; and that meanwhile he would keep his beloved friends in England informed from time to time of the course of events.

Not much was said by any of the family when the letter was closed. The intelligence conveyed in it was too overwhelming to admit of many words. On Madam Philippa, however, the effect was startling; it seemed like the trumpet sound to battle, heard afar off by a war-charger. Oh, would that she were there!—that she had but the power, as she had the will, to tell the proud deceivers and the cruel persecutors of that idolatrous Church which she, to her shame, had so long upheld, that their day of triumph would be short; that the arrows of the Almighty were already sharpened against them!

"My poor Gerard! my dear brother!" sobbed Floris Franck, giving way, for once, to a flood of manly tears. The weeping mood lasted not long with him, however; while, with a sterner determination than ever, he vowed that he would with fourfold resolution, if possible, devote himself afresh to the freedom of his enslaved country.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The Beggars of the Sea.

THE Prince of Orange before going to France had, among other plans for the emancipation of his country, issued commissions to various seafaring persons, who were thus empowered to cruise against Spanish commerce. "The Beggars of the Sea," as those privateersmen designated themselves, soon acquired as terrible a name as the wild beggars, or the forest beggars. But the prince, having had many conversations with Admiral Coligny on the important benefits to be derived from the system, had faithfully set himself to effect a reformation of its abuses after his return from France. The Seigneur de Dolhain, who, like many other refugee nobles, had acquired much distinction in this roving, corsair life, had for a season acted as admiral for the prince. He had, however, resolutely declined to render any accounts of his various expeditions, and was now deprived of his command in consequence. At the same time strict orders were issued by Orange, forbidding all hostile measures against the emperor, or any

of the princes of the empire; against Sweden, Denmark, England; or against any potentates who were protectors of the true Christian religion. The Duke of Alva and his adherents were designated as the only lawful antagonists. The prince, moreover, gave minute instructions as to the discipline to be observed in his fleet. The articles of war were to be strictly enforced. Each commander was to maintain a minister on board his ship, who was to preach God's Word, and to preserve Christian piety among the crew. No one was to exercise any command in the fleet save native Netherlanders, unless thereto expressly commissioned by the Prince of Orange. All prizes were to be divided and distributed by a prescribed rule. No persons were to be received on board, either as sailors or soldiers, save folk of good name and fame. No man who had ever been punished of justice was to be admitted. Such, adds the historian whom we copy, "were the principal features in the organization of that infant navy which, in course of this and the following centuries, was to achieve so many triumphs, and to which a powerful and adventurous mercantile marine had already led the way."[1]

This sounds well; and the precautions taken by the prince for the regulation of his Water Gueux, or Sea Beggars,—supposing that organization to be desirable or justifiable,—were praiseworthy. It may be said, too, not only that persecution drives even wise men mad; but that desperate diseases, such as that which afflicted the Netherlands, require desperate remedies. Added to all this, we know God makes not only the wrath of His enemies, but the imperfections and mistakes of His chosen ones, to praise Him. Yet the writer may be permitted to doubt whether the means adopted by the Prince of Orange in this instance, though intended

[1] Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic.*

for the help and deliverance of God's persecuted people, were such as can be approved, when looked at in the light of the gospel. Let us beware of judging harshly, however. It is for us, in these times of more advanced light and higher privileges, to learn wisdom by those things wherein they erred. From those to whom much is given, much also is required. That the reader may understand why this paragraph has been written, we turn once more to the history before us.

"Allusion has more than once been made," says the historian, somewhat later, "to those formidable partisans of the patriot cause, the marine outlaws. Cheated of half their birthright by nature, and now driven forth from their narrow isthmus by tyranny, the exiled Hollanders took to the ocean. Its boundless fields, long arable to their industry, became fatally fruitful, now that oppression was transforming a peaceful, seafaring people into a nation of corsairs. Driven to outlawry and poverty, no doubt many Netherlanders plunged into crime. The patriot party had long since laid aside the respectable deportment which had provoked the sarcasm of the loyalists. The Beggars of the Sea asked their alms through the mouths of their cannon. Unfortunately, they but too often made their demands upon both friend and foe. Every ruined merchant, every banished lord, every reckless mariner who was willing to lay the commercial world under contribution to repair his damaged fortunes, could without much difficulty be supplied with a vessel and crew at some northern port, under colour of cruising against the viceroy's government. Nor was the estimable motive simply a pretext. To make war upon Alva was the leading object of all these freebooters, and they were usually furnished by the Prince of Orange, in his capacity of sovereign, with letters of marque for that purpose. The prince, indeed,

did his utmost to control and correct an evil which had inevitably grown out of the horrors of the time. His admiral, William de la Marck, was, however, incapable of comprehending the lofty purposes of his superior. A wild, sanguinary, licentious noble, wearing his hair and beard unshorn, according to ancient Batavian custom, until the death of his relative Egmont should have been expiated,—this hirsute and savage corsair seemed an embodiment of vengeance. He had sworn to wreak upon Alva and upon popery the deep revenge owed to them by the Netherland nobility; and in the cruelties afterwards practised by him upon monks and priests, the Blood Council learned that their example had made at least one ripe scholar among the rebels."

Such, then, were some of the instruments which God, in His overruling providence, saw fit to make use of in humbling the pride of haughty persecutors, and in bringing deserved punishment upon them for the terrible crimes they had committed, and the guilt they had heaped upon their defiled souls.

"Some of the instruments," we have written; but not all were such. There were multitudes of men among the avengers of God's elect whose character stands out in noble and enduring contrast with that of De la Marck, and those who were like him; and of these it may be said, that the justice of their cause and the purity of their motives sanctified them in the sight of heaven. They were God's warriors. It was He who taught their hands to war, and their fingers to fight, —who was their goodness and their fortress, their high tower and their deliverer, their shield, and He in whom they trusted. But "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth,—and some to honour, and some to dishonour."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A Broken Reed to Lean Upon.

MONTHS rolled on, and the exiled family in their city of refuge were kept in painful suspense regarding their relatives in the Netherlands. From time to time, as he had promised, letters were received from the advocate Merula; but he could give no further information than that Kasper and Lysken Arnoldzoon were still detained as prisoners at the Brill,—the husband in the common jail, the wife in a convent,—their trial having been indefinitely postponed.

Meanwhile the mission of Floris Franck to the English seemed to be rendered nugatory by the shifting policy of the queen and her government. At times hopes were held out that some steps would be taken favourable to the liberties of the persecuted Protestants abroad, and some encouragement was given to the Orange fleet of privateers, of whom an account was given in the previous chapter; so that "the Duke of Alva, in revenge, seized all the English merchants in the Low Countries, threw them into prison, and confiscated their effects;" the queen retaliating in like

manner, and also giving her English subjects liberty to make reprisals on the subjects of the Spanish king. These differences, however, were sought to be accommodated by treaty; and early in 1572 "the negotiations between the Duke of Alva and Queen Elizabeth had assumed an amicable tone, and were fast ripening to an adjustment. It lay by no means in that sovereign's disposition," we are told, "to involve herself at this juncture in a war with Philip; and it was urged upon her government by Alva's commissioners that the continued countenance afforded by the English people to the Netherland cruisers must inevitably lead to that result. In the latter end of March, therefore, a sentence of virtual excommunication was pronounced against De la Marck and his rovers,"—a peremptory order being issued by the queen, forbidding any of her subjects to supply them even with provisions.

Just at the time of this order being promulgated a fleet of twenty-four vessels, manned by the Beggars of the Sea, had anchored off Dover, expecting to be provisioned as theretofore, and also greatly needing supplies. The vessels, which were of various sizes, were commanded by De la Marck, Treslong,[1] Adam Van Haren, Brand, and other distinguished seamen. Passing over these great names, however, we place ourselves on board one of the smaller craft, commanded by a God-fearing mariner, named (after the great Reformer of Germany) Martin Luther Vanderwerf.

[1] William de Blois, Seigneur of Treslong. "This adventurous noble, whose brother had been executed by the Duke of Alva in 1568, had himself fought by the side of Count Louis (brother of the Prince of Orange), and, although covered with wounds, had been one of the few who escaped alive from the horrible carnage at Jemmingen. During the intervening period he had become one of the most famous rebels on the ocean." His father had formerly been governor of Brill. *Motley.*

Whatever might have been the character of his brother commanders, and the characteristics of their followers, Captain Vanderwerf had resolved, in the spirit of the Old Testament warrior Joshua, that, as for him and his ship's crew, they would serve the Lord. He himself, like his superior in command, Treslong, had been driven by fiery persecution to seek shelter on the ocean; and his previous training had fitted him for the quarter-deck of one of the prince's cruisers. He had, however, kept back himself, and restrained his men from the excesses which had cast a shade over the Protestant fleet in general, and had softened, as much as lay in his power, the rigours and horrors of civil warfare, as carried on on the high seas.

As was the commander, so in great measure was his crew. Young men—who for the Gospel's sake had forsaken home, and lucrative positions, and loving hearts—were to be found there. Mostly acquainted, from their native habits, with sea-craft, these young men needed but few instructions and constant practice to make them efficient sailors. Among them, moreover, was a sprinkling of strong-hearted, efficient hands, whose whole lives had been spent on the sea, and whose experience had been gained in long voyages to the Eastern Indies.

No one more readily than Captain Vanderwerf had adopted and carried out the reforms required by the prince in the ship he commissioned. A godly minister held an honoured position on board the "Peter and Paul," as the barque was named; and that he was instant in season and out of season in instructing the crew, and in preserving Christian piety among them, needs no other proof than that the preacher at this time was the Francis Junius with whom we have already become acquainted, and who, compelled for a time to flee from his former haunts, had gladly responded to the invitation of

THE FLEET OF "THE BEGGARS OF THE SEA," OFF DOVER.

his friend the captain to take the spiritual oversight of his mariners.

It was on one of the latest days in March that (the fleet, as we have said, having just arrived and anchored off Dover) Captain Vanderwerf caused a boat to be lowered, and despatched it to shore, under the command of his chief mate, to obtain a fresh supply of provisions,—those on board being nearly exhausted. It was a lively sight, doubtless, from the heights and cliffs on either side of the ancient town,—these foreign ships in the offing, with their sails furled, and a whole flotilla of boats pulling to land, each boat's crew eager to be the first to exchange their Spanish gold and silver coins for what was vastly more precious to them,—the bread, and meat, and beer which they so much needed. They were gaunt-looking men mostly in the boats,—men inured to hardship and peril, who had risked their lives often, and were ready to risk them again, some for plunder, others for vengeance on persecutors, and others in defence of their liberties, civil and religious.

But, whatever might be their motives for taking up arms, the townspeople of Dover well knew that towards their town, and England at large, these "Beggars of the Sea" had only the most friendly and grateful feelings; for it was only a year ago that the same fleet came into the Lower Roads, bringing with them several prizes, in the shape of Spanish vessels, which they sold to advantage in the town. And when chased by other Spanish vessels, the Orange fleet had drawn up under the protection of the Castle guns, which fired upon the chasers, and drove them away;—the authorities then declaring that English waters were a sanctuary not to be invaded with impunity. Moreover, at other times, the Sea Beggars had been freely supplied at Dover with all they needed in the way of communication and food, even when

shelter was not required. All this was altered now, however; and it was with sorrow, and shame, and indignation that the good Protestants of Dover, who not so very long ago had themselves tasted of the bitter cup of persecution under Queen Mary, of infamous memory,—I say it was with sorrow shame, and indignation that they knew themselves to be prohibited, under pain of the heaviest penalties, from affording relief to these starving mariners,—their own brethren in the faith, as they might have argued,—who were now approaching their beach with such joyful confidence.

We are still on board the "Peter and Paul," however; and while the boats are yet absent from the fleet, we may listen to a conversation on deck between the chaplain of the ship and a young man, who had only been a week or so one of her small band of marines.

"Methinks, young sir, I have seen you elsewhere, though I cannot charge my memory with the time and place," said pastor Junius.

"We have met three times, sir," said the young man, respectfully. "The first time was at Antwerp, now five years ago, when I was staying a few days in the house of the merchant Franck, and you too were there. Since then, you have stayed at the house where I was lodging in Leyden,—the house, I mean, next the Golden Key. The last time I saw you was in the summer of last year at the Brill, whither I accompanied my dear friend, Lysken Arnoldzoon, and she underwent the examination which ended in her being detained as a prisoner. I too was examined, but was allowed to go free."

"Ah! and you saw me, and knew me then?"

"Yes, sir; you were in the crowd when we were taken to the Hall,—dressed as a mason, with a hod on your shoulder I knew you then, though perhaps you remembered me not."

"I remember you now, my friend,—and your name?"

"Is Hans van Muler."

"The son of that godly woman in Ghent?"

"The same, sir."

"You are a printer, then, by trade. By what strange chance, or providence rather, do I now find you in this new occupation,—a Beggar of the Sea?" asked the pastor.

"It is a sad story, sir," replied the young marine, with much painful emotion. "It is now a month since I was again at the Brill, whither I was drawn by strong affection, to learn the doom of my dear friends, Kasper Arnoldzoon and his wife Lysken, who were about to be tried before the Blood Council. It may be, sir, you have heard of the sentence pronounced against them?"

"No, I have been on board now some months, and have heard but few particulars, save that persecution is still rife."

"You may say so, sir," rejoined Hans, "as you would have felt had you been present when my friend Kasper was, for the faith of Christ, condemned to death by drowning, and his loving wife, to be buried alive."

"And heard you this?" demanded the preacher, vehemently, grasping the young man's arm convulsively.

"No, sir, for the public were not admitted to the trial: but the sentence was known as soon as pronounced; and in one of the churches a Te Deum was sung because of it."

Great drops of perspiration started from the brow of Hans as he spake; and he laid his hand upon the sword he wore, half drawing it from its sheath, and then returning it again with a violence which told of the pitch of excitement to which the very mention of the atrocious sentence maddened him. The preacher was scarcely less moved.

"O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show Thyself! Lift up Thyself,

Thou Judge of the earth! Render a reward to the proud!"—he cried, in bitterness of spirit; adding,—"and they blame us for resistance. The Lord judge between us and them. But they carried not the sentence into immediate execution?"

"I know not, sir," said Hans. "I know only that when I heard it I went straight to the Zealand islands, where I heard that some of the prince's ships were like to be,—determined that I would no more settle down to peaceful work till the blood of those saints should be avenged."

"I wonder not at it. And yet, Hans, it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord. I will repay.' But I wonder not at it. You, however, found us not at anchor. We should have put in to Walcheren for provisions, but the wind was contrary, or we should not now have been in such straits."

Here the conversation was broken off abruptly, by the return of all the boats.

"They have been quick in their dealings," said one of the sailors of the "Peter and Paul."

Alas! they had had no dealings. Met on the beach by the authorities of the town, the boat's crew were told of the orders received from the queen's government, which no man in Dover dared disobey. They were significantly pointed also to the Castle on the frowning heights, the muzzles of whose guns might be seen already thrust through the embrasures, and to the batteries below. And thus they were given to understand that the power which had, only a year before, protected, was now ready to assist in crushing them.

There was no help for it; and that same day, the distressed Beggars of the Sea weighed anchor and sullenly departed from the English coast, bitterly reflecting on the fickleness and servility to their persecutors of England's queen, whom (rightly enough) they accused of being herself a persecutor, if not a papist at heart.

CHAPTER XL.

Deliverances.

THE fleet of Beggars was weighing anchor preparatory to leaving the inhospitable shores of England, when two Spanish galleons, propelled partly by sails, and partly by oars, were entering cautiously into the British Channel, and swiftly taking their course northward.

In one of these vessels, chained to one of the oars, was a young man of some two or three and twenty, though the deep lines on his countenance, and his haggard appearance altogether, would apparently have added at least ten years to his real age. And no wonder; for he had been in one of the Inquisition prisons in Spain.

This was his history in brief:—About five years before this twenty-ninth day ot March, in 1572, the young man, then but a stripling, had sailed in a merchant vessel to Spain. The ship was wrecked, and he, narrowly escaping the perils of the sea, was landed on the coast of Spain, and found his way to Madrid. Here, on the day succeeding his arrival, he was unhappily in the street at the time of a procession of the host. Being a

Protestant by education and prepossession, and having a high spirit as well, he refused to bow as the procession passed. This was observed, and the young man was arrested and cast into prison. At first, he thought it glorious to be a martyr for the truth; but having no strong principle to sustain him, the terrors of the Inquisition so wrought upon him after a few months' confinement, that, rather than figure in the condemned garment of an auto-da-fé, he denied his faith, and professed to be a convert to popery. As a warning, however, to other heretics, the unhappy young renegade was required to take a prominent part of the Act of Faith, wearing the penitent's black dress, with painted flames pointing downwards, as indicating that he had narrowly escaped the punishment of death, but had been, out of the superabundant mercy of the Church, pardoned on repentance. Even then, however, the new convert was not permitted to go free, but was compelled to serve in the government galleys as a slave. No wonder, therefore, at his aged looks. The hardships of his degraded position,—an ardent longing for home,—and, above all, the gnawings of conscience,—combined to bear down both flesh and spirit with a burden too heavy to be borne.

Night fell on the galleons when they had barely passed through the narrowest part of the straits between France and England; and then, while the sails were set for a favourable breeze to carry them still northward, the poor galley-slaves were allowed to rest from their oars, and to snatch a few hours' uneasy repose. For them, indeed, morning came too soon. At the first dawn, they were summoned once more to their hateful task, and smarting both in spirit and in body from the taunts and the blows of their hard taskmasters, the slaves once more bent their bodies and strained their muscles at the heavy and cumbrous oars at which they were compelled to tug. Poor souls! they knew not how soon they were to

be delivered—and some of them for ever—from earth-born tyrants.

A heavy fog hung upon the water that morning, shutting out, as with a thick veil, all surrounding objects. A few fathoms ahead of the galleons might be dimly discerned the green waves, beyond all was mist. Presently, however, the cloud was gradually lifted, and the rising sunbeams glimmered and glistened on the waters; and then was seen, that around, on every hand, were vessels of various sizes and designation; but carrying flags which told too well for the captains of the galleons their nation and occupation. No peaceful merchant ships were they; but the adventurous and daring fleet of the Beggars of the Sea.

To escape by flight seemed all but impossible; yet it was attempted. By stripes and blows and curses and threats, the poor wretches chained to the oars were urged to redouble their efforts, while more sails were set, and hasty preparations were made for resistance. Like the eagle that hasteth to its prey, the swift ships of the Netherlanders, with crews rendered more than ordinarily ferocious by hunger, gathered round the devoted galleons. That they were Spanish vessels was enough to urge them on;—that they were probably laden not only with merchandise but well stored with provisions, still more whetted the desire for capture.

An engagement ensued, short but sharp; and then the Spanish flag was lowered, and the captors boarded their prizes. Blood had been spilt on both sides, but especially on that of the Spaniards; and the unhappy slaves had not escaped the slaughter dealt indiscriminately by the guns of the Sea Beggars. With their chains upon them, but their grasp on the oars relaxed and never more to be renewed, lay the wounded and the dead on the blood-sprinkled deck and benches of the captured prizes.

"Hans! Hans! know you me not? Me, unhappy! Me your old friend, Karl Franck?" was shrieked, rather than spoken, as the young marine from the "Peter and Paul," who was one of the first to board the larger galleon, sprang by the benches of chained rowers towards the end of the vessel where yet some show of vain resistance was being offered. The cry reached the ear of him to whom it was addressed. He turned and looked at the wounded slave from whom the cry had proceeded; and the next moment the two friends from boyhood were clasped in each other's embraces.

There was no time for explanation then; but when the last blow had been stricken, poor Karl was tenderly taken on board the "Peter and Paul," and his wound, which was but slight, was carefully dressed.

There were bread and meat and drink in the captured galleons, for happily they were freighted with provisions. These were speedily distributed among the hungry captors, and as speedily devoured. Then the prizes were manned; and if the Spanish tyrants presently found themselves compelled to change places with their galley-slaves, it was but one among many other instances of the stern, rigorous vengeance dealt out to their persecutors by the Beggars of the Sea.

Once more the fleet was in sailing order. The intention of the admiral had been to make a descent upon the coast of North Holland; and accordingly the ships steered for Enkbuizen, both because it was a rich seaport, where provisions could be obtained either by fair purchase or by violence, and also because it contained many secret partizans of the Prince of Orange. But the wind suddenly chopped round, and the ships were unable to proceed on their voyage northward. And then it entered the minds of the leaders that there was a town in the hands of their enemies nearer to

them than Enkbuizen; and "on the 1st of April, having abandoned their original intention, they dropped down towards Zealand, and entered the broad mouth of the river Meuse."

We must leave it with other historians to tell at large how, on the afternoon of that day, the inhabitants of Brill saw with astonishment the little fleet approaching their town,—how it soon was first whispered, and then became widely noised abroad, that this fleet was none other than that of the Beggars of the Sea,—how a stout ferryman, named Peter Koppelstok, who was secretly favourable to their cause and that of liberty, boldly went out in his boat to inquire the purpose of their coming,—how he at once was recognised by Count Treslong, and employed as their envoy to the magistrates of the town, and how he so succeeded in this mission as to spread a panic throughout the town, and especially among those who were paid to be its defenders,—how these hastily quitted their post and sought safety in flight,—and how, before nightfall, the important town and fortress of the Brill had been, without bloodshed, taken possession of in the name of the Prince of Orange.

There was food enough found now to satisfy the pressing wants of the invaders; and spoil enough to glut their thirst for revenge.

Not many citizens, indeed, remained in the town; for on the first alarm the greater part of them had fled, and had they remained, no indignity would have been offered to them, and their private property would have been safe; for the Beggars of the Sea made no war upon their own peaceful countrymen. But "as soon as the conquerors were fairly established in the best houses of the place," we are told by the historian, "the inclination to plunder the churches could no longer be restrained. The altars and images were all destroyed, the rich furniture and gorgeous vestments appro-

priated to private use. Adam van Haren appeared on his 'vessel's' deck, attired in a magnificent high-mass chasuble; and Treslong thenceforth used no drinking-cups in his cabin save the golden chalices of the sacrament."

The Christian reader must deeply lament that these and other excesses which followed, should have disgraced the cause of liberty of conscience and national freedom; but the larger amount of guilt and its awful responsibility must rest on those who, by the sufferings of death inflicted on thousands of Christ's martyrs, and by their determination to stamp out with the iron heel of despotism the last sparks of a people's freedom, brought upon themselves fearful retribution at the hands of those whom they had changed from peace-loving men and loyal subjects into cruel and vindictive foes. They were "rude and even ribald hands," truly, some of those by whom these deeds of sacrilege and bloodshed were committed, yet were they permitted to assist in laying the foundations of that liberty for which nobler workers had cheerfully died, and upon which a superstructure of grand proportions was thereafter to be raised.

Churches, and chasubles, and chalices, and images, and altars, were not, however, the only object of blind infuriated violence or desecration. With more worthy motives than those of plunder or vengeance, a band of the victors hastened to the prisons and convents. In this band were the two re-united friends, Hans van Muler and Karl Franck, the latter yet weak from the wound so recently received, but both animated by the hope that they were not too late for the rescue of Kasper and Lysken Arnoldzoon. There had been no very recent executions in Brill—they had ascertained this—and it was yet possible that their friends might be restored to them.

To the prison first:—the jailers had fled; but the keys

were forthcoming, and the liberators rushed in. There were prisoners there confined for crimes against property and life, and justly, no doubt, suffering the penalty of their misdeeds. To these, probably, some such words were addressed as,—"Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." But there were others, and a larger proportion, whose only offence was that they had been faithful to their Saviour and the gospel,—the heaviest offence of all in the eyes of the foreign rulers of the oppressed land; and these were immured in cells, deep underground, damp and dark and fetid. One by one these were released; and last of all, from the wretchedness of all these dungeons tottered the emaciated form of Kasper Arnoldzoon, who, obeying the summons to come forth from his living grave, thought full surely that the hour of his deliverance from the burden of life and the malice of his persecutors was come. And so, in one sense, it was; but not as he interpreted it.

"Kasper! Kasper!"

He heard the voice. Did he dream, or were they the old familiar tones of his Leyden friend? Another moment, and he knew it was no dream. "Courage, courage, Kasper! you have borne sorrow bravely: now bear joy as bravely. You are free."

"And Lysken? I understand you not, Hans, nor you, kind stranger," for Karl, so altered as not to be at once recognized, had cast himself upon the neck of his brother-in-law, and was weeping tears of happiness mingled with remorse for his own past apostasy,—"I understand it not; but Lysken,—my dear wife Lysken?"

This was still the burden of his cry when they led him away, and knocked from him his fetters, and bade him once more breathe the air of freedom:—

"Lysken! Lysken! I see not my Lysken!"

To the convent then;—the convent where Lysken is a prisoner, condemned, and awaiting the execution of her sentence; where she has daily and hourly suffered the severities of conventual discipline to bring down her Protestant spirit and make a convert of her before she becomes a martyr.

The convent is broken into; and the mother abbess or prioress calmly expresses her surprise at the demands of the impatient, and as she calls them, godless rioters. Lysken Arnoldzoon! She knows no Lysken Arnoldzoon.

"Away, away! we do but waste time. Search the house from cellar to attic."

And so the band spreads, driving the nuns hither and thither like frightened hares, yet not laying a hand or harming one of them; and presently the hidden prisoner is found; and there, standing by her are her friend Hans, her husband, ever dear, but doubly dear to her now; and Karl—her own beloved, long lost brother—Karl!

There were joyous, thankful hearts that night in Brill!

CHAPTER XLI.

The Progress of Freedom: A Chronicle.

IT was the intention of the admiral to abandon his conquest of Brill, after the events already recorded, and when his ships had been well supplied with provisions: but Treslong and other captains in the fleet opposed this motion, representing that he ought not to give the key of the Low Countries out of his hands. He was convinced; and they prepared to defend the advantage they had gained.

Thus writes the old Dutch historian, Brandt, from whose pages we extract and lay before our readers a brief chronicle of events which immediately succeeded the capture.

On hearing of this blow to his power, the Duke of Alva ordered the Count de Bossu to march from Utrecht, with ten companies of Spanish soldiers, that so he might stifle the war in its birth at Brill, whither he also went himself, but was beaten off by De la Marck; and, returning by Dort, was shut out of that city. But at Rotterdam he massacred a great number of the inhabitants,—doing the like also at Delfs-Haven. At Flushing,

however, the parish priest, who had no love for the Spaniards, had the courage to exhort the people on Easter-day, at high mass, to stand up for their liberties: and they listened so well to him that they drove out the Walloon garrison; kept out the Spaniards, who thought to have marched in; and afterwards demolished the fort which was begun to be built there. They likewise deputed the Heer van Erpt (who had put the sailors of that place into a ferment with the news from the Brill) to De la Marck for some assistance. They also justified themselves in taking up arms because of Alva's tyranny and his violation of the privileges of the country. This they represented in strong terms, without speaking a word of religion, which seemed somewhat strange: and they concluded with assurances of their being faithful subjects of the King of Spain.

On the 4th of May, the town of Ter Veer, in Zealand, declared for the Prince of Orange, as the King's stadtholder against Alva. And on the 21st of the same month, the people of Enkbuizen did the same,—putting their magistrates under confinement. On the 24th the Count Louis of Nassau (the prince's brother) made himself master of the town of Mons, in Hainault, by surprise. Alva judged this loss to be of such consequence to him, by reason of the neighbourhood of France, that he, neglecting everything else, immediately bent his march to Hainault.

In the meantime those in Holland and other provinces had their hands at liberty. Those of Enkbuizen put themselves under the Prince's protection as stadtholder. The same did Alkmaer, Edam, Monikedam, and Purmerent on the 28th. Oudewater was invested the 19th of the said month; and Gonda on the 21st.

At this last place, whilst the town was taken by less than sixty men, one of the burgomasters, in a panic fear, ran to

the house of a widow to save his life: and being shut up in a cupboard, he asked if he was safe there. To which she answered, "Oh yes, master burgomaster, for my husband has often hid in it from you, when you and others sought for him, and the keeper of the prison stood there before him." This cold reproach was all the revenge she took of him for his cruel persecuting temper.

After this, Leyden and Gorkum declared themselves for the Prince, and many of the popish burghers, who fled to the castle, were obliged to surrender the next day on condition that their lives should be spared. "But this conquest," adds the historian, "was blemished with all kinds of disorder, insolence, and cruelty. Nineteen of the clergy were carried to Brill, and afterwards (except three who abjured the popish religion, together with the pastors of Heynoordt and Munster, and a certain friar, were, by order of the Admiral de la Marck, put to death in a contemptuous and cruel manner, without any regard to the Prince's letters, who had most strictly required that all persons, as well spiritual as temporal, should be protected in their rights and privileges."

On the 25th of May, Zeirickzer was obliged by James Simonson de Rijk, then Admiral of Teraeer, to embrace the Prince's cause; and immediately the Reformed religion was publicly exercised. But, notwithstanding they were fighting for the cause of God, human passions soon discovered themselves. . . . . The images and altars were demolished and thrown out of the churches the evening before the sacrament, by the soldiers, in spite of their commander, who was Master of the Horse to the Prince. On the other hand, the people of Dort stipulated, before they would admit the Prince's forces, or agree to declare Alva a public enemy,—"that they might keep to the oath they had sworn to the King of Spain, as Count of Holland; and be secured in all their rights and

privileges, without any alteration or diminution: that all degrees and conditions of men, whether spiritual or temporal, all monks, nuns, priests, all magistrates and other civil officers of high or low degree, should continue in their functions, free and unmolested: that all the goods of the inhabitants should be protected: and that no churches, chapels, convents, or houses belonging to the clergy should be broken up, or in any manner injured."

The first sermon preached by the Reformed was under a lime-tree in the Klevenier's Doel: but that did not last long, nor would they be so contented. In a little time the images were thrown out of the churches, the altars were broken down, and the Reformed religion was publicly exercised.

Haarlem abandoned the Spanish interest on the 3rd of July; but by the treaty made with the Prince's deputies it was likewise agreed that "no person, ecclesiastical or civil, within or belonging to the city, should be hurt or damaged in body or goods; and that all the religious orders should continue in their convents in the free exercise of their religion, without damage or molestation."

The same day the Reformed at Horn desired of the magistrates, by a written memorial, that they would grant them the great church to preach in for the future. But the answer returned them was that "whilst their numbers were so small, they might make a shift with our Lady's Church;" to which were added, out of civility, certain reasons why it was more for their interest so to do. But this had no effect: on the contrary, one of the captains of the burghers, being informed what answer was given to their "petition," had the courage to go up to the council-chamber and ask them—"Do you say we are but few in number? If you do not immediately grant our request, I will beat the drum, and then you shall see how strong we are!" This bold speech alarmed them, and the

church was granted, but on condition that the altars and images should be decently removed and laid up together in the south part of the building till it appeared how things would go. To this end they called together the next day all the carpenters and joiners, both Papists and Protestants, to prevent exceptions, and ordered them to put in execution the above-mentioned agreement. But most of them, who had no affection for that trumpery, handled it very roughly, hacking and hewing all that came in their way; and if any of the images came down whole, they were treated in the same manner. When the church was thus cleared, a minister, named Leonard, preached the first sermon. After, that Clement Martinson, who dwelt at Embden, was recalled, and ordained minister.

Several towns, as well in Gelderland and Over-Yssel, in the bishopric of Utrecht, and in Friezeland, were, at the same time, subdued by the Reforming party; and some of their own accord shook off the Spanish yoke; and those very people of the Low Countries, who before had tamely (and almost motionless) looked upon the burning of their fellow-subjects, the massacreing of their magistrates, the trampling upon their laws and religion, and the dissolution, as it were, of the Commonwealth, resolved now at length to revenge what was past, and to ward off what was coming upon, or threatened against, them.

"That we thus, though briefly," adds the historian, in the summing up of these and many other particulars concerning the sudden revival and astonishing progress of the spirit of freedom at this time,—"that we thus touch upon the casting off the yoke of Spain, and the laying the first foundation of the civil liberty of Holland, is not without reason; for upon these were afterwards built the liberty of conscience and the free exercise of religion which we now

enjoy. To this also contributed the Prince's resolution of protecting and securing even the papists themselves in their religion; which resolution he again declared in the instructions he gave to Yonker Diedrik Sonoy, his deputy in Holland, requiring him, first of all, to use his utmost endeavours to deliver the towns of that province from Spanish slavery, and to restore to them their ancient liberties, rights and privileges; and further, 'to take care that the Word of God might be preached and published there, and the religion which was conformable to that Word tolerated in case the inhabitants generally, or any portion of them, desire it: but yet by no means to suffer that those of the Romish Church should be in any sort prejudiced, or that any impediment should be offered them in the exercise of their religion, till such time as he, the Prince, otherwise directed, unless in case of urgent necessity, and then not without the consent and direction of the governors and council of the place.

"The said Sonoy was likewise directed to do his best, in the meanwhile, that the people might live in peace and tranquillity together. . . . . Also, to oblige the magistrates and inhabitants to swear, among other things,—that they would by no means permit any person to be hindered or disturbed in preaching, or in reading, of the true Word of God, according to the prescription of the gospel; or to be examined concerning his faith, or persecuted on that account by the Inquisition, or any placards relating to it; and that in like manner, they would suffer those of the Romish religion to remain free and unmolested."

No apology need be offered by the writer for having thus grouped together in one chapter of this story, some of the instances of that surprising impulse which in so short a time was communicated from place to place with electric rapidity, and by which a whole people was roused from the lethargy

of indifference or despair. And though some of the proceedings of the liberators of their country from its unbearable yoke of both temporal and spiritual despotism were tinged with intolerance and violence, and even, in some instances, with cruelty, the great wonder is that the actors in these scenes were in general so moderate and forbearing and forgiving,—especially considering the example which had been set them by their persecutors. It is worthy of remark, also, that even at this time of revolution, and in spite of numberless provocations, the people remained loyal to their monarch, despicable as they knew him to be, and were willing to attribute the miseries they had suffered to evil counsellors and barbarous under-governors. Alas! they had more yet to suffer before the day of final triumph. They were now but putting on the harness.

CHAPTER XLII.

More Extracts from Nina's Journal.

APRIL 1572.—After long procrastination, I again turn to you, my little book, to tell you of my joys and sorrows. I am very joyful to-day, for good news, almost too wonderful to be true, has been brought to us here in London. My sweet cousin Lysken and her husband, whom we mourned as having been cruelly murdered, were delivered from their impending doom by the valiant crews of the Prince's fleet, who at the same time seized upon the town of Brill and took possession of it in the Prince's name. This good news came in a hasty letter written by my sister Margaret's betrothed, who had not time, or was not able, to give further particulars. But this happy intelligence has turned our mourning into dancing. My father is gone out to learn more. He thinks he can do this in Paul's Walk, where the merchants congregate.

He hath even now returned; and his tidings are more surprising than we could even have imagined, only in dreams. He says that it is not only currently reported, but fully

known that the fleet of Sea Beggars (as the Prince's ships are called), which was so cruelly driven off from Dover when their crews were starving, did, in despair, make the attack upon Brill, of which we had before heard, and not only succeeded in the bold attempt, but that all over the country the people are declaring for the Prince and against the Duke of Alva. But this is not all; for my father says that this news (together with some more sorrowful, concerning what the Duke's army hath done in Rotterdam, and the wickedness practised there upon the peaceable inhabitants) has put all London into a great fermentation; that the merchants and others are going about, gathering money, and buying powder and shot and guns, to send to the Prince, and to help on the deliverance of our poor country. He hears also that the English parliament at Westminster is crying out to the Queen to help in driving out the Spaniards from the Netherlands. But he knows not how this may be.

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May.—The Lord is doing great things for us, whereof we may well be glad. Everywhere in Holland the people are rising up in aiding the Prince; and it is admirable how mercifully he desires to treat those who have been the persecutors and murderers of Protestants, now that he has the power of punishing them.

There has been a great meeting of our countrymen to-day, —of those, I mean, who are living in London. They have from time to time sent over all the money they could spare, to help on the good work; and now many of them have determined to return, and take part in it manfully. The Lord help them! My dear father would fain be going too; but he is told that, for the present, he cannot be spared from his labours in England. And, indeed, he is at work almost

day and night; and not without good effect, he hopes,—though those with whom he has to do are most uncertain to deal with, since, as he says, they know not their own minds from one day to another.

* * * * *

Very excellent news has my dear father brought to-day. Five hundred brave English soldiers have passed over to the Netherlands, commanded by Colonel Morgan, to the help of the Prince of Orange. And that Christian sea captain, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who often has visited us, has also sailed with nine good ships for the same purpose. And this by consent of the Queen of England's government! This government hath also declared that as the Prince of Orange is a prince of the empire, the ports of this country shall no longer be shut against his cruisers. Alas, that all this talk of war and fighting should be written down in you, my book, as good news! And yet I must call it so; for methinks it is God Himself who has put it into the hearts of His faithful people to struggle against their oppressors and persecutors. And now what can such weak ones as I am do, but pray God to give success to His own cause? for surely these troubles are none of our countrymen's seeking,—who would fain live in quiet and loyal obedience to the powers that be, if that were possible. But it was not; and now the cry should be,—"Who will bring us into the strong city? Who will lead us back into Edom (our own Edom)? Wilt not Thou, O God, who hadst cast us off? And wilt not Thou, O God, go forth with our hosts? Give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly; for He it is that shall tread down our enemies."

* * * * *

Another letter from Paul Merula; and he tells us what

he knew not when he before wrote, that my poor long-lost cousin Karl has returned from Spain, and that he took a good part in the delivering of his sister and her husband from their cruel persecutors. The Lord reward him and Hans van Muler, and all others who helped in this good work! He writes also that Lysken and the rest are now in Leyden under good protection. The Lord be praised for His great mercy!

* * * * *

June.—I must needs write concerning those things of which my heart is fullest; and what should that be, next to my God and Saviour, but the great things He is doing for my dear country? Tidings have reached us that by the help of the brave Huguenot chief, Coligny, with two thousand soldiers, the great city of Mons has been taken by the Prince's brother, Count Louis; and that the persecuting Duke of Alva is driven to great extremities. Would that he would go home to Spain, and trouble the Netherlands no more!

My father thinks that ere long we shall be enabled to return to our own dear land, for the Prince writes to him that he can be more useful to the good cause there than here. I am glad of this; for though I have cause to love England well, I love my native land still better. And though the broad Thames on which I can now look out when I lift my eyes from you, my little book, is pleasant enough, it is nothing to be compared with the rivers and canals at home, with the broad dykes to keep out the sea. And even this city of London, though larger than Antwerp, falls very short of it in almost all other respects. But then, here we may read the Scriptures and worship God in our own homes; and this makes up for all. Oh how joyful to think that the time is coming when, in all the Netherlands also, there shall cease to be persecution. Alas! they say that there is persecution even in England at this present time. I

know not how this may be. I know only that we poor exiles have liberty of worship, and our own ministers to preach to us. And for this we are thankful.

I wrote down on my last page that, next to religion, my heart was fullest of what concerns my dear country. But sister Agnes, who sometimes reads what I write, and has read this, does not approve of it. She does not know what our country has done for us (so she says), that we should be so fond of it. And besides, she thinks that between our God and it stand those whom we ought best to love of all on earth. Oh, sister Agnes! as though I had forgotten these! Are they not part of our country? But I know how it is. The young Englishman who comes here so often, and who loves Agnes, and whom Agnes loves so dearly! He has made almost an Englishwoman of her already.

And I do not forget my dear father, and my sisters and good Aunt Philippa; nor even nurse Ursel and Jan. Ah, well! and I do not forget dear old Antwerp, either; and I think of Antwerp whenever I read that psalm of David, where he says, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!"

Oh, I do so long for home again; and Lysken, my dear cousin Lysken, I would hear from her own lips the story of her strange rescue. I think, too, that when those who knew me once, a few years ago, see me, they will not know me now that I am so altered—having felt no more of my old weakness since I was so helped to bestir myself when my dear father was in trouble. Methought, even then, I heard a voice, saying, "Arise, He calleth thee." And I know now that it was so.

My father has just come in from London, with more despatches, and says that so far as he can judge, he shall

THE MARRIAGE IN CHELSEA CHURCH.

be ready to leave England in three months' time. He bids us therefore make preparations for returning home.

* * * * *

July. I guessed how it would be. On finding that our stay here was to be so short, sister Agnes was in sore trouble. She loves England so well that she desires to make it her own home. For a week or more she did nothing but sigh, and was so troubled that she could not rest. At last came out the great secret, that she desired to be the wife of the young London merchant, Anthony Heywood, who, with our dear father's consent, had, some time past, made love to her. Master Anthony, also, is loth to lose sight of my sister; and he has to-day made suit to my father that the marriage may be no longer delayed. And so it is to be. Next month dear Agnes will be wife to an Englishman, and will no more be of our household. Dear Agnes! She will be happy, I think, for her husband who is to be, is of good repute as a merchant; and he is a true Christian man, and a very pleasant gentleman. I would that he were a countryman of ours; but we cannot have all things as we would. And my dear father said pleasantly to me, only yesterday, when we were talking together of Master Heywood, "Ah, Nina, next to being a Netherlander, I would fain myself be an Englishman."

So we are now all very busy in preparing for this marriage, and I shall have no more time for you, my book, until it be over.

* * * * *

August. Dear sister Agnes was married yesterday, in Chelsea Church, and is now Mistress Heywood. We had a grand feast after the wedding, and this morning her husband hath taken her to her new home in the Chepe. My heart is too full, I cannot write more now—only this—"The Lord bless

them and keep them: the Lord make His face to shine upon them, and be gracious unto them: the Lord lift up His countenance upon them, and give them peace!"

* * * * *

September. Since I last wrote in this journal, I have been so busy as to have had but little time that could be called my own. And now, when I look back on what I wrote in these last pages, I blame myself for so readily forgetting, even for a moment, the great sorrows of others. But I knew not then what has since been told:—

How that near the end of last month was a dreadful massacre of Protestants in France, beginning at Paris,—men, women and children being slain by hundreds and thousands, because they obeyed the gospel of Christ. And this was done by order of the king who, only a few days before, had written a letter with his own hand, in which he engaged to sustain the Protestant cause, both in France and the Netherlands; and who had sent French troops into Flanders to assist the cause of religious freedom there! Yet this man, it is said, stood at his palace windows, and shot down with an arquebus his own faithful subjects, as though they had been wild beasts, for no other crime than that they worshipped God and believed in Christ, according to the Scriptures. O Lord! how long shall the blood of Thy martyrs cry to Thee from the altar? Shall not the death of Thy saints be avenged?

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My father says that the news of this event has filled all London with indignation; and that even the Queen is greatly distressed and angry. He tells us that when the French ambassador appeared at court but a few days ago, the Queen and all her ladies and her courtiers and the ministers of state, were dressed in deep mourning, and that the ambassador passed

through the crowd without one pleasant look, until he was in the Queen's presence; and that then she told him in full what her thoughts were of these barbarous murders. There are some who think (says my father) that the Queen will now surely take the part more openly of the Protestants both in France and the Netherlands. But he himself thinks that she will suffer her anger to pass away in words, as caring not much for the reformation of religion. Yet has she ordered Sir Thomas Gresham to raise thirty or forty thousand pounds, and take it to Hamburg for the use of the Prince of Orange. Methinks, however, it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes, or queens either. Nay, I am sure.

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1573. *January. In Leyden.*

We arrived here two months since: but I have had little time, until now, for writing. It is three months or more since we left England, and my sister Agnes. The parting was a sharp one; but she hath a good and kind and godly husband. The Lord bless and keep them! We came by way of Ostend, and then on to Ghent, where we stayed some days with the good burgomaster and his wife and dear Paulina; and from thence we heard further particulars of the martyrdom of our sainted brother Guy Regis, and of the death of his mother. We heard also, that the Beguinage had been disturbed by rioters, and the nuns compelled to take shelter in the city—some three or four having been received into the burgomaster's house, where they were treated with much kindness.

From Ghent we passed on to Antwerp, where, finding our old house to have been sold by those who iniquitously took possession of it, we stayed not long—my father deciding to come hither and wait the current of events: the more so, as his brother (my uncle Gerard) and his family are here.

Here also we have the society of Paul Merula,—much to my sister Margaret's contentment, and that of my sweet cousin Lysken and her husband, who are worthy of all our loves. It is sorrowful to see how the cruelties practised upon them both wore down their bodily strength, which they have yet not recovered. And yet my cousin tells me that never had she more bright and comfortable and loving sight and converse with the dear Saviour Jesus, than when she was imprisoned in a convent cell, and in daily expectation of the doom which had been passed upon her. And herein was the promise again fulfilled, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

There are also others here with whom one would be content to live; and if our poor country were but in quiet. But it seems as though this would never be. Lord, be Thou our shield and defence; and help us to say, as the great reformer Zwingle wrote,—

"Though Satan's net be o'er us tossed,
We feel Thy hand, nor shall be lost.
His shafts, his voice, alarm no more,
For here we lie, Thy cross before."

CHAPTER XLIII.

The Siege of Leyden.

ON the 26th of May, 1574, an army of eight thousand men, commanded by the Spanish general Valdez, encompassed the beautiful city of Leyden, which for the second time was to be exposed to all the horrors of a siege. The controversy was now fast hastening to its final and inevitable issue. For long the people of the Provinces, while struggling against the power of the Romish Inquisition and the tyranny of regents and governors, had maintained their loyalty to their sovereign ruler. By this time, however, it must have been seen that no hope of either civil or religious liberty could be entertained while Philip of Spain retained a hold upon the distracted country.

As has been elsewhere written, "Warfare at the best is terrible and deplorable. It is terrible, for it inflicts countless miseries, not only upon those who are actively engaged in it, but also on hundreds of thousands who have neither voice nor part in it. It is deplorable, if only for the evil passions which it calls into fierce, unholy exercise. Yet there is a best as well

as a worst in war. If warfare must be, it is best when arms are taken up in defence of the right, and laid down when that right has been obtained; best, when those who are thus engaged in defending a righteous cause can appeal to God, and say with sincerity, 'Lord, Thou knowest that we are for peace; but men of evil minds will not let us be at peace;'—best, when the men who fight are nerved with a consciousness that they are battling against oppression, and wrong, and tyranny."

It was against these evils that the people of Holland and her sister provinces were struggling. "The tyrant," they said, "would rather stain every river and brook with our blood, and hang our bodies upon every tree in the country, than not feed to the full his vengeance, and steep himself to the lips in our misery. Therefore we have taken up arms against him, to free ourselves, our wives, and children from his blood-thirsty hands. If he prove too strong for us, we will rather die an honourable death, and leave a praiseworthy fame, than bend our necks and reduce our dear fatherland to such slavery. Herein are all our cities pledged to each other, to stand every siege, to dare the utmost, to endure every possible misery, yea, rather to set fire to all our homes, and be consumed with them into ashes together, than ever to submit to the decrees of this cruel tyrant."

The Duke of Alva was the cruel tyrant here spoken of, and with sufficient reason; for he himself had boasted that he had caused eighteen thousand six hundred inhabitants of the Provinces to be executed during the period of his government. And yet, tyrant as he was, he was but the tool of another and still more cruel tyrant; and now that he had been removed, and was replaced by another, the people knew by bitter experience that in every regency it had been, and still was, Philip of Spain, who was the instigator and main-spring of all the miseries they had endured.

And they struggled for more than national and personal freedom. "As long as there is a living man left in the country," said they, "we will contend for our liberty and our religion." Their motto might have been, "*Pro aris et focis*,"—for our altars and our hearths. And the altars first,—the right of serving God. The questions to be decided were,—should God and God only be worshipped through His Divine Son, the only Mediator;—or should the people be compelled to bow the knee to the Virgin Mary, as a better and surer intercessor, and to the saints of the Romish Church, and to the hosts of heaven?—should the bread and wine of the communion of the Lord's supper be the simple and touching commemoration of His death, or be made the means of a deadly delusion, and the foundation of an idolatrous rite?—should the Holy Scriptures be circulated and read throughout the land; or should the very possession of the word of life be the sure passport to a martyr's death?—should persecution be continued till the gallows, and the pit, and the fire had become settled institutions in the country, part and parcel of its state religion; or should a wise toleration or a wiser equality permit every man to worship the Father according to the dictates of his conscience?

So the inhabitants of Leyden, with their countrymen in other cities, determined rather to continue what to men of little faith must have seemed an unequal, a desperate, and a hopeless contest, than suffer the yoke of priestly bondage to be again laid on their shoulders. "It was easier now," says the historian, "for the Hollanders to go to their graves than to the mass."

The details of the siege of Leyden are probably familiar to many of our readers, and for the few selected particulars to be recorded here we once more borrow the pen of the young journalist Nina Franck.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Nina's Journal during the Siege.

THAT was a happy man who could say, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, yet will I be confident."

O Lord, a host is encamped against us, and we are but few and weak: be Thou our helper.

I thank God that the people of Leyden are not wanting in courage, and that their trust is not so much in an arm of flesh as in the Lord Jehovah. And they place reliance too on the good Prince of Orange, who, though he be not with us in the city, is at no great distance,—his head-quarters being at Rotterdam and Delft,—and who has written to the governor of the city, encouraging him to hold out, and assuring him that, though his hands are over full of work for his country, he will devise some means for our deliverance.

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Our house is in one of the great squares of the city, and not far from the old Roman tower. Before this siege began I used to climb up the hill to the tower, with Ursel always, and sometimes with our faithful Jan as a guard, to look round on the beautiful country on all sides. But my dear father has forbidden me to do this now, lest some missile should do me harm. Dear father! he is ever watchful. But I have more fear for him than for myself; for he is constantly exposing himself on the walls. He has taken the command of a company of the defenders, and Kasper Arnoldzoon is his lieutenant. While poor Jan, though he has but one arm, would not be refused enrolling himself. Methinks when cripples can fight for liberty, it must be hard if liberty does not come at last. I may put down here that Jan's dame came with us from Antwerp, and has undertaken to be cook for our family.

We are not a large family, truly. There are but my father, and Aunt Philippa, and Margaret, and myself, with Ursel, and Jan and his good wife; yet will there soon be more hungry mouths than helping hands, I fear me. For there is talk that provisions will soon be scarce enough, even as they were last year in Haarlem, where the people had to feed on linseed and rape-seed, on cats and dogs, and such rats and mice as they could catch, and at last were compelled to make soup of horses' hides and ox-hides, with grass and nettles from the graveyards, and the weeds which grew between the street stones for pot-herbs. I know not how this may be, but I know where it is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of God's mouth." I would that all had faith to receive this.

My sweet cousin Lysken,—it is sad to think what her tortures were in that convent at Brill. Even now her bodily sufferings are great; and it needs but to see her to be roused

to righteous indignation against that religion which can inflict such deeds of cruelty. Did not our dear Lord say, "By their fruits ye shall know them?"—and it must needs be an evil tree to bring forth such fruit as malice, and hatred, and cruelty. And in after times, even more than now, will it be seen and known that we in this country are fighting a holy fight for truth, and justice, and mercy, and God's free word.

My poor uncle Gerard is visibly declining. He still holds the post procured for him some months since, and the sound of his musical chimes cheers his spirits: but the tumult of this siege is more than he can well bear, and he daily says (and we think it may be too true) that he shall not see the end of it. He is full of despondency, likewise, concerning the great issue of the controversy. We do what we can to raise his spirits, but with little success. Yet is he a good man.

With my uncle and cousin is now living the godly widow Van Muler, with her younger children. I have cause to love her much, for she was of great comfort to me when I was at Ghent, awaiting my dear father's trial. She came hither on hearing of the illness of her friend, my cousin Lysken, after her escape from the persecutors, hoping also to be with her Hans. But this was denied her, by reason of Hans continuing in the Prince's fleet, as also my cousin Karl, who is with him.

We are greatly comforted in our present state of uncertainty and danger by the presence of our dear friend, Paul Merula; and we have wonderful assistance, too, in the Divine and better life, the true Gospel being preached in almost all the churches,—the popish images, and vestments, and masses having been swept away and abolished, to give place to the Holy Scriptures. And, strange though it may seem, it is yet true, that there is now hardly a papist to be found in the city,—no, nor indeed throughout the land,—that is to say, among the Netherlanders. For those who were Catholics

before the great heat of these late persecutions have been taught by those very means to search into the truth of the Reformed doctrines, and to embrace them, as was the case with dear Aunt Philippa. And even Ursel, my poor nurse, though once so ignorant and superstitious, has left off praying to dead saints, and rejoices in a living Saviour.

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June 26.—Leyden has been now one month encompassed about by the enemy; and though they are not able to get an entrance, they watch so closely that no provisions from without can enter. Indeed, the city is so strictly invested, that no communication can be held with any withoutside the walls, except by means of carrier pigeons; and it is now forbidden that any man, under any pretence, shall attempt to pass through the city gates.

* * * * *

A message has been received from the Spanish general, offering pardon to the citizens if they will but open the gates and accept the king's authority. Also some letters have been sent to certain people in the city from their friends in the king's army,—to be read to the citizens at large,—imploring and advising them to submit to the king's mercy, and to take pity upon their poor old fathers, their daughters, and their wives. But these messages have no effect, only to make our brave defenders determined to hold out to the last. For, say they, were we weak enough to accept the king's pardon, who shall vouch for the fulfilment of his promises? "Has he ever kept any such promises?" they ask; and "Is it not known that it is one of his rules that no faith need be kept with heretics?" And as to the letters that have been received, the citizens say that the best pity they can show to poor old fathers and daughters and wives, is to keep them

from the tender mercies of the besiegers. And truly I think so too; for "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

So those in authority have written this Latin line on a sheet of paper, and sent it to the Spanish general:—

"*Fistula dulce canit, volucrem cum decipit anceps.*"

Which means, as Paul Merula tells Margaret and me,

"The fowler's pipe sounds sweetly enough when he wishes to snare the bird."

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June 30.—Poor Leyden is feeling more and more the terrors of a siege. A little more than a month has passed away, and the burgomasters with the military authorities have seen needful to put the whole city on a strict allowance of food. No provisions are to be sold in the shops or markets, indeed there are none to be sold, as the proper officers have already bought up all the meal and flour, and beasts for slaughter, which are served out day by day to the people, both rich and poor alike. Half a pound of meat and half a pound of bread is allowed to each man, and a less quantity for the women and children, according to age. Paul Merula tells us that there are some who complain of being thus stinted in food. It seems strange to me that any who are willing to fight on behalf of the Bread of Life should think so much of the bread that perisheth.

* * * * *

July.—Uncle Gerard is daily declining in strength; and there is but little hope that he will hold out much longer. He has given up his office, being no longer able to climb the steep stairs of the belfry, and having not sufficient strength to perform his work, even were he there. His has truly been a troublous life, if looked at in the dim and obscure light of this world. Yet surely he hath not lived in vain,

and in the bright sunshine of eternity will doubtless be shown that——

* * * * *

Even while I was writing of my uncle Gerard, came a messenger (one of the young Mulers) from my sweet cousin Lysken, saying that her father was suddenly taken with severe pains, and desiring me to hasten to her. So I went.

Dear Lysken was in great trouble, yet divinely supported. Her father is, doubtless, stricken for death—such death as is left to the Christian in the dissolution of the mortal body. His pains were not so great as they had been, and his mind was clear, so that he was able to give expression to his joy of faith. These were some of his words:—He lamented much that he had been so unworthy a servant of the Great Master; so fearful and half-hearted; so desiring his own ease and quiet rather than to be up and doing and suffering for Christ. Yet he believed, yea he knew, that though so unworthy, the good Lord had pardoned and accepted him, through His dear Son. And then he repeated some verses to which his carillons had been set,—such as these:—

"Lo! at the door I hear death's knock!
Shield me, O Lord, my strength and rock.

Thy hand once nailed upon the tree,
Jesus, uplift, and shelter me.

From guilt and sin may I be free!
My mouth shall sing alone of Thee.

Oh, may I die since I am Thine,
Thy home is made for faith like mine."

Then afterwards he spoke of the righteousness of the cause for which we are fighting; and offered a prayer that God would prosper our arms, saying, when he had finished his prayer,—in the words of one of the prophets:—"For the

vision is yet for an appointed time; but in the end it shall speak, and shall not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

After this, dear uncle fell into a quiet slumber; and I said what I could to comfort Lysken. And then came in my father and Margaret. Presently my sister and I returned home, leaving my father with his brother and niece.

But how strange it seemed, in passing out of that house of mourning, and from the solemn scene of a death-chamber, to hear the sounds of warfare, and to see armed men hurrying to and fro, intent on destroying the lives of their fellow-creatures by hundreds and thousands, when the natural fading away of one solitary human existence affects us so painfully!

Six hours later.—Our dear father has just returned, full of serious thought. Uncle Gerard is dead. He died most peacefully. I must see my sweet Lysken to-morrow. I can write no more now.

* * * * *

August.—It is a month since I opened you, my book; my thoughts have been so taken up with other and graver matters. First, there was our poor uncle's burial, and our cousin Lysken to console. She sorrows much for her father, yet not as those who have no hope. Nay, she rejoices that one whom she loves is free from pain and care and grief, while she thinks that she will not be long parted from her father. Not long, truly, though she live out her full span of life, which I trust she may, if so it be God's will.

Next; there is work in Leyden for all to do who have hands and hearts. The hospitals are daily becoming more full of poor wounded men, who need loving nursing; and the women of this city have undertaken this duty. I thank God that I, who, but a few years back, was so weakly and so

indulged also, that I thought it next to impossible to wait on myself in the smallest thing, should now be enabled to perform this work for others.

* * * * *

The siege continues; and even the bravest of our defenders have longing desires for it to end. Almost all provisions are gone; and those who, at first, thought it hard to be put on a modest allowance of meat and bread made of good corn flour, must now needs be content with malt cake, which is all the food that is left; and of this there is but a scant supply. I can now better understand that pitiful story of the siege of Samaria, told in the Bible. And methinks if a prophet were to arise to tell us that to-morrow a measure of fine flour should be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, there would be many to cry out, with the unbelieving nobleman,—"If the Lord would make windows in heaven, then might this thing be!" Lord, increase our faith, and give us strength to bear our present affliction,—yea, even to die, rather than take the wicked counsels given by some, to throw open the gates, and take chance of the mercy of the enemy. Surely the Lord will appear for us if we be but true to Him and to ourselves. But it will be in His own time, which is the best time.

* * * * *

A letter has been received on this day (the 12th of August), written by the Prince of Orange, encouraging the citizens to continue their brave resistance, and promising speedy relief. And it is now well known in the city that the Prince is determined to cut through the noble dykes along the Meuse and the Yssel, and so let in the sea, and that also the great sluices at Rotterdam, Schiedam, and Delftshaven shall be opened for the same purpose. The enemy, it is thought, will

then be compelled to retire, since the whole country round Leyden will be flooded. There will be great loss in this, and some peril also, as it is well known that a great part of the country is lower than the sea, which is only kept out by those great works—the dykes. And if these be once pierced through, where will the destruction end? But the Prince has obtained the willing consent of the great estates of the Provinces; for say they, "Better a drowned land than a lost land;" and they say also, that once get rid of the Spanish tyrants and persecutors, there will both time and means be found for rebuilding the dykes and getting rid of the water.

* * * * *

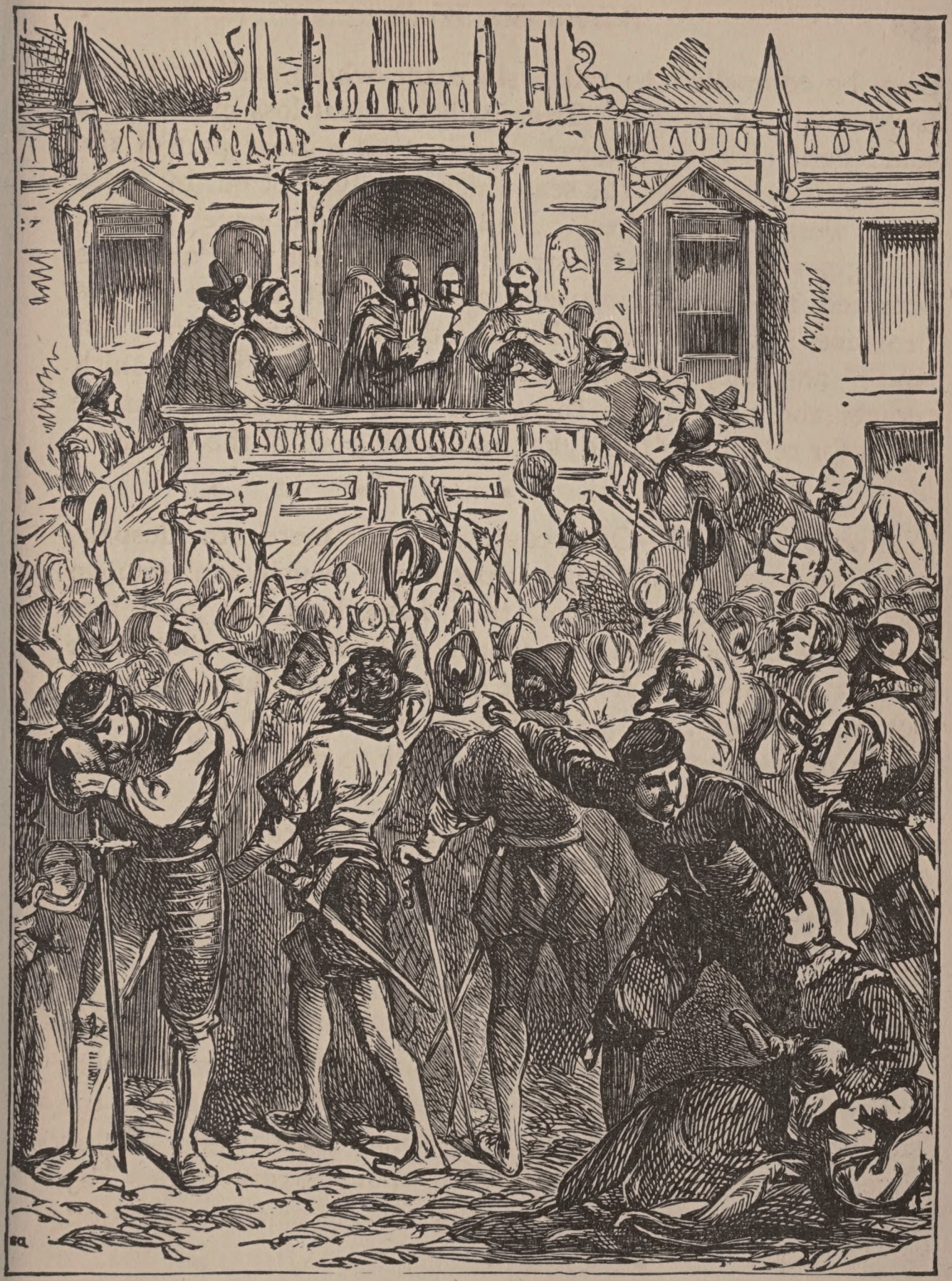
August the 22nd.—Our people are once more near despair, save those who have that strong faith which can remove mountains. They say that they have held out now two months with food, and one month without food,—that there is malt cake for only four more days, and that then will come not only hunger, but starvation. Lord, we cry unto Thee! Have mercy upon us, for we are ready to die. Our strength is dried up; our straits are very sore!

It is pitiful to see the wan and pinched faces of the women and children, and how patiently they bear the cruel pangs of hunger!

* * * * *

Another letter from the Prince to-day, brought, as all others have been, by a carrier pigeon,—saying that the dykes are pierced, and that the water is rising within them. There is now only one other great outer barrier which separates the city from the sea. Methinks it is strange that what would in time of peace and quiet be looked upon as ruin to this city and country, should now be eagerly desired as their salvation.

* * * * *



THE LETTER OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE READ IN THE MARKET-PLACE OF LEYDEN.

Same date: evening.—There have been strange doings in Leyden to-day. The glad news of which I have written as above, have given to our distressed people a holiday;—it has been more sad than joyful, seeing how full of misery the city is: yet there have been sounds of rejoicing. The bells of the churches were set ringing as soon as the Prince's letter was read in the market-place; and the streets were full of music from all sorts of instruments, playing lively airs which have not been heard for many a long day. Guns also were fired, as though to testify of some great victory, whereat, I should think, the Spaniards greatly marvelled. Better than all these jubilant sounds, which yet had some of the true spirit of gratitude to God;—but better than these, the voice of joy and thanksgiving was heard from many hundreds of habitations; and the churches were thronged with worshippers. It seems, indeed, as though we may now hope to re-echo the words of David:—"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." But I can write no more now.

* * * * *

Here end our extracts from Nina Franck's journal; for on that same day of writing she was stricken with weakness and great bodily pain, from which she recovered but slowly, after the events to be recorded in the succeeding chapters had transpired, and when the famine and other terrible hardships incident to the siege, which, in common with others, she had been called upon to endure, had passed away, except from the memory of the sufferers.

CHAPTER XLV.

More about "The Beggars of the Sea."

THE hopes so confidently expressed in the last of our extracts from Nina's journal were doomed to disappointment. Instead of the speedy deliverance anticipated, the suffering and starving citizens of Leyden had yet a full month to wait ere that deliverance came. For a little while we must leave them to battle with and endure their sore trials, while we turn to other and more stirring scenes.

Floating over the broad expanse of flooded land between the outermost broken dykes previously mentioned, and those inner ones which still protected both Leyden and the besiegers, was a fleet of two hundred vessels of various sizes, and variously manned. From the rigging of these vessels the beleaguered city could probably be seen at the distance of some seven or eight miles; so also could the intervening obstacles which opposed the further progress of the fleet, and which was thus condemned to inaction. Laden as these vessels were with abundance of provisions for the distressed citizens, it was

grievous to think that days, if not weeks, must elapse before that relief could be administered, even if the expedition should eventually be crowned with success; and that in the meantime all the inhabitants of that once joyous and still beautiful city were languishing or perishing with hunger. Not to dwell on this, however, we turn to a little group on the deck of one of the vessels, and recognise in them three of the actors in some of the scenes already described,—namely, the pastor Junius, Hans van Muler, and Karl Franck,—now in earnest conversation.

"And you thought not of Him," said the preacher, sadly, "who has told us not to fear those who can only kill the body, and can do no more; but to fear Him who can cast both body and soul into hell?"

A low murmured response from the penitent Karl, whose tearful and grief-marked countenance showed the sufferings of remorse he endured, acknowledged the justice of the reproving question.

"It is a base return for all His love and agonies for us," continued the pastor, "when our poor weak natures give way under the torment of bodily pain, and cause our lips to deny His gospel. It was not thus that He suffered, being tempted. Ah, if Jesus had been thus overpowered by bodily anguish, and hearkened to the taunt, 'If Thou be the Christ, the King of Israel, save Thyself, and come down from the cross,' think what had become of the sin-laden world."

"Poor Karl is already bowed down with grief, sir," said Hans, respectfully and tenderly, at the same time throwing his arm around the neck of his weeping friend; "and," added he, "he has laid his confession of sin at the foot of the cross. Will not this suffice?"

"It is for this that I remind him once more of his grievous sin, that I may but the more magnify the grace of our Lord

Jesus Christ," rejoined the preacher. "There is mercy with Him, that He may be feared; and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem His Israel from all their transgressions—all. Why, the very name borne by our barque should remind us of the extent of Christ's pardoning love. Did not Peter thrice deny his Lord,—and was not he restored?"

"You think, then, sir, that without acquiring new guilt our poor Karl may join with us this day in our communion of the Lord's supper?" said Hans.

The pastor smiled. "Whom the Lord forgives, He forgives freely and fully," said he, "and their past guilt He remembers no more."

That same day (it was the Lord's day) a solemn but touching and interesting scene took place on the open deck of "The Peter and Paul," when a table was seen spread with the material elements of the Christian commemorative rite, and the captain, with the larger number of his crew, united, as brethren in the Saviour, in showing forth their Lord's death. It was the more solemn in that a penitent brother was received into the Church, after having, through craven fear and intensity of torture, become for a time a renegade to his Protestant faith.

Here and there throughout the fleet that day were similar observances witnessed. Not, however, in every vessel. There were, for instance, several which had recently joined the Beggars of the Sea, as the Prince's fleet continued to be called. These were manned by eight hundred hardy sailors from Zealand. "Wild and ferocious," they are described as being, "seamed, hacked, and even maimed, in the unceasing conflicts in which their lives had passed. Wearing crescents in their caps, with the inscription, 'Rather Turkish than Popish;' renowned far and wide as much for their ferocity

as for their nautical skill, the appearance of these wildest of the Sea Beggars was both eccentric and terrific. They were known never to give nor to take quarter; for they went to mortal combat only, and had sworn to spare neither noble nor simple, neither king, kaiser, nor pope, should they fall into their power." No Christian observances or ordinances were theirs, we may be sure; they were as much heathens as their namesakes of the southern seas were found to be two hundred years later in the world's history. Such, however, were some of the instruments used for the working out of His designs, and the deliverance of His people, by Him who "maketh the wrath of man to praise Him," and "hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

It must be left for secular histories to tell how this fleet of two hundred vessels slowly progressed in their work of deliverance,—how its leaders and crews overcame resistance, and cut through dyke after dyke; how the sea gradually advanced nearer and nearer to the besieged city, and how the vessels followed on the sullen waves, floating over what had a few weeks before been flourishing fields, now submerged, and steering their way onward amidst the tops of trees and the ruins of farm-houses, with their surrounding buildings and orchards; how again and again a vehement east wind drove back the waves, and left the vessels stranded in mud and saturated soil, causing the deliverers almost to despair of accomplishing the enormously difficult task on which they had staked their lives; how one fort after another of the besiegers was taken, and the Spanish outposts were driven in towards the city walls; how villages, deserted by their inhabitants, were fired; how days and weeks thus passed away, so that though it was on the 3rd of August that the first dyke had been cut through in the presence of the Prince

of Orange, the end of September had arrived, and the object was still unattained.

And meanwhile, as though to try to the utmost the faith of His people, the Lord saw fit to strike His principal instrument in this enterprise with sudden and prostrating sickness. Fever had seized upon William of Orange, his country's deliverer, as he was called, and he could do nought but lie tossing and moaning upon his uneasy couch at Rotterdam. "There he lay," we are told, "utterly prostrate in body, and with mind nearly agitated to delirium, by the perpetual and almost unassisted schemes which he was constructing. Relief, not only for Leyden, but for the whole country, now apparently sinking into the abyss, was the vision which he pursued, as he tossed upon his restless couch. His attendants were in despair; for it was necessary that his mind should for a time be spared the agitation of business. The physicians who attended him agreed, as to his disorder, only in this,—that it was the result of mental fatigue and melancholy, and could be cured only by removing all distressing and perplexing subjects from his thoughts. But all the physicians in the world could not have succeeded in turning his attention for an instant from the great cause of his country. Leyden lay, as it were, anxious and despairing at his feet, and it was impossible for him to close his ears to her cry."

We must forbear from further description. It is enough to say that ere long the Prince was restored to his despairing people, and that the cry of distress, to which he was unable to respond with help, was even then entering into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Let us now return for a moment or two to the beleaguered city.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Man's Extremity.

OCTOBER had commenced, and help was yet distant, even if it were still approaching. "The burghers," we are told, "had been in a state of uncertainty for many days, being aware that the fleet had set forth for their relief, but knowing full well the thousand obstacles which it had to surmount. They had guessed its progress by the illumination from the blazing villages, they had heard its salvoes of artillery on its arrival at North Aa; but since then all had been dark and mournful again, hope and fear, in sickening alternation, distracting every breast. They knew that the wind was unfavourable, and at the dawn of each day every eye was turned wistfully to the vanes of the steeples. So long as the easterly breeze prevailed they felt, as they anxiously stood on towers and house-tops, that they must look in vain for the welcome ocean.

"Yet, while patiently waiting, they were literally starving. Bread, malt-cake, horse-flesh, had entirely disappeared; dogs, cats, rats, and other vermin were esteemed luxuries. A

number of cows, kept as long as possible for their milk, still remained; but a few were killed from day to day, and distributed in minute proportions, hardly sufficient to support life, among the famishing population. Starving wretches swarmed daily around the shambles where these cattle were slaughtered, while the hides were chopped and boiled, and eagerly devoured. . . . . The green leaves were stripped from the trees, every living herb was converted into human food; but these expedients could not avert starvation.

"The daily mortality was frightful,—infants starved to death at the breast,—mothers dropped down dead in the streets with their dead children in their arms. In many a house the watchmen in their rounds found a whole family of corpses—father, mother, and children—side by side; for a disorder called the plague, naturally engendered of hardship and famine, now came, as if in kindness, to abridge the agony of the people. This pestilence stalked at noonday through the city, and the inhabitants fell like grass beneath the scythe. From six thousand to eight thousand human beings sank before the scourge alone; yet the people resolutely held out,—women and men mutually encouraging each other to resist the entrance of their foreign foes,—an evil more horrible than pest or famine. . . . Leyden was sublime in its despair.

"A few murmurs were, however, occasionally heard at the stedfastness of the magistrates, and a dead body was placed at the door of the burgomaster, as a silent witness against his inflexibility. A party of the more faint-hearted even assailed him with threats and reproaches as he passed through the streets. A crowd had gathered around him as he reached a triangular place in the centre of the town, into which many of the principal streets emptied themselves, and upon one side of which stood the church of Saint Pancras, with its high

brick tower surmounted by two pointed turrets, and with two ancient lime-trees at its entrance. There stood the burgomaster, a tall, haggard, imposing figure, with dark visage, and a tranquil, but commanding eye. He waved his broad-leaved felt hat for silence, and then exclaimed, in language which has been almost literally preserved, 'What would ye, my friends? Why do ye murmur that we do not break our vows, and surrender the city to the Spaniards?—a fate more horrible than the agony which she now endures. I tell you I have made an oath to hold the city, and may God give me strength to keep my oath! I can die but once, whether by your hands, the enemy's, or by the hand of God. My own fate is indifferent to me; not so that of the city intrusted to my care. I know that we shall starve, if not soon relieved; but starvation is better than the dishonoured death which is the only alternative. Your menaces move me not; my life is at your disposal; here is my sword, plunge it into my breast, and divide my flesh among you. Take my body to appease your hunger, but expect no surrender so long as I remain alive.'

"The words of the stout burgomaster," continues the historian,[1] "inspired new courage in the hearts of those who heard him; and a shout of applause and defiance arose from the famished but enthusiastic crowd. They left the place, after exchanging new vows of fidelity with their magistrate, and again ascended tower and battlement to watch for the coming fleet. From the ramparts they hurled renewed defiance at the enemy. 'Ye call us rat-eaters and dog-eaters,' they cried; 'and it is true. So long, then, as ye hear dog bark or cat mew within the walls, ye may know that the city holds out. And when all has perished but ourselves, be sure

[1] Motley — from whose work, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, these and previous extracts have been borrowed, and are here, once for all, thankfully acknowledged.

that we will each devour our left arms, retaining our right arms to defend our women, our liberty, and our religion, against the foreign tyrant. Should God, in His wrath, doom us to destruction, and deny us all relief, even then will we maintain ourselves against your entrance. When the last hour has come, with our own hands we will set fire to the city, and perish, men, women, and children together in the flames, rather than suffer our homes to be polluted and our liberties to be crushed."

It is impossible to read these passages of history without a feeling of sympathy with the sufferers, and of indignation against the cruel tyranny which had thus roused the spirit of an entire nation. Possibly, however, some, while reprobating the persecutors of this era, may also condemn the resistance offered by the persecuted, as being inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. Be it so ; nevertheless, the shame and disgrace must mainly rest upon those who had so long trampled on the dearest rights of the people, and had found sweet music in the dying groans of countless martyrs of God. "Woe unto the world because of offences," said Christ ; "for it must needs be that offences come ; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh." Let it remembered also that much as the unhallowed passions sure to be engendered by "wars and fightings" are to be deplored and deprecated, yet that, in the times of which we write, the best and holiest of men, with some exceptions, believed themselves to be justified in opposing force to fraud, and resistance to murderous cruelty and wrong, especially where wrong was done to the souls of men. Without entering, however, upon the question as to how far the taking up of carnal weapons of warfare in defence of liberty of conscience and freedom from persecution is justifiable, we proceed with our narrative.

The last day of September was come, and the defenders and perishing citizens of Leyden saw no nearer prospect of relief. They looked in vain from tower and rampart for the advance of the wind-retarded waters. The east wind still blew, and the fleet which they had looked for as their salvation was helplessly stranded on the distant fields. A few more days, or even hours, and their walls would enclose a city of the dead. It seemed to some, indeed, as though the wrath of the Almighty were being poured out to the utmost; or as though His ear were heavy, that He could not hear His people's cry, His arm shortened, so that He could not save. And so, that night, they shut themselves up in their desolate dwellings, some to yield their hearts to despair, some to nerve themselves to the last stage of sullen endurance; some to exchange mutual embraces, almost, as they thought, for the last time, with the corpse-like wives and children, whose tearless (for the fount of tears in most was dried up)—death-pale, shrivelled countenances were but the images of their own; and some to supplicate with faith and energy which would not be denied, the mercy of their God and Saviour, or to prepare themselves for the last extremity of earthly misery, by a contemplation of the heavenly kingdom to which they were hastening.

Of these last were the little group gathered now in one apartment of the house of Floris Franck. He himself was there, bent and bowed with the weakness of famine. The pastor of a neighbouring church was there; so was Paul Merula; so were Margaret and her cousin Lysken, and the widow Van Muler, and nurse Ursel and Jan's wife. There was room for all in the ex-merchant's house; and they had chosen to remain together, to encourage each other in prayer and hope. Nina was there, once more helpless on her couch of pain, but happier than those around her, in that the fever

which still consumed her had so destroyed her bodily appetite, that had the daintiest viands been placed before her, she would have turned from them with loathing.

Some belonging to that household were absent—Arnoldzoon, and the two young sons of Van Muler; her little daughter was absent too, for she was numbered among the thousands of the dead; but the others just mentioned were sharing in the watch of the city.

They spent the night in prayer, in that apartment. The deep but tremulous voice of the minister rose with agonized fervour while he poured out supplications such as these:—"Save us, O God; for the waters of affliction are come in unto our soul. We sink in deep mire where there is no standing. Our eyes fail while we wait for our God!.... O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do Thou it for Thy name's sake! O Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldst Thou be as a stranger in the land,—as a mighty man that cannot save? Yet Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us; and we are called by that name;—leave us not! Art Thou not He, O Lord, our God? Therefore we will wait upon Thee: for Thou hast made all these things."

It was yet night, but morning was approaching—the dawn of the twenty-first of October.

"Father." The voice was Nina's, soft and low. In a moment her father was by her side.

"It is coming," she said; "I have felt it coming this hour past."

"Darling Nina, no, no. This is but a fancy, springing from weakness. The physician tells us you will recover. This sickness is not unto death; only believe. Dear Nina, we shall yet, if God will, be happy together in this life, as well as in the life to come."

THE WIND BRINGS PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE.

"It is not of death I spoke," said Nina, smiling, "but of life. Open the casement, that it may enter."

"Nay, but dear Nina, this east wind ——"

"There is no longer an east wind, dear father."

"Nina is right!" cried Merula, with startling earnestness; "I hear it in the creaking vane above; the wind has changed; it has been changing this hour, though I thought not of it." In another moment the casement was open.

And then came in a gentle fanning breeze from the south-west, right from the broad ocean miles away.

"'By His power He hath brought in His south wind,'" exclaimed the pastor. "Let us pray; let us pray!"

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Gentle at first, the soft south-west wind increased to a gale, from a gale to a tempest. All that day, and the next night and the next day, and the next night, the tempestuous wind blew. It was God's own breath. Driven by this, as surely as in His appointed time He drove back the waters of the Red Sea, that His people might pass over dry-shod,—so surely did the waters of the North Sea come pouring in upon the southern coast of Holland, rising in masses, higher and still higher. With irresistible force it widened the breaches in the pierced dykes, rushed in upon the land, advancing like a wall to where the stranded ships lay helpless. Higher, higher, higher up their sides! They are afloat now. Higher, still higher. God be praised! Leyden will be saved!

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Let history tell the rest.

CHAPTER XLVII.

God's Opportunity.

LEYDEN was saved. Panic-stricken by the hand of God, the besiegers fled, hordes of them perishing in the fierce and turbid waters, even as the Egyptians had once perished in the Red Sea, and other hundreds dying by the weapons of the avengers. On, on went the fleet triumphantly. On the third of November, every canal in Leyden was covered with boats and vessels of the fleet; and every quay was crowded with the famished multitudes of citizens. Bread, bread! bread enough for all now, with more to come, and yet more; and all the country around open to send in fresh supplies, if not by land, then by water. What mattered!

As to the Spaniards, they had vanished like a morning mist. Where were they? None could tell then; but, wherever they went, they troubled Leyden no more; and ere five years had passed away, the Dutch had shaken off the broken fragments of the Spanish and popish yokes, and rejoiced in the civil and religious freedom they had won—God helping them.

But though the fate of the besieging army was not at that time clearly known, traces of them were found in the ruins of their late encampments round about the city. "In the head-quarters of the General Valdez, at Leydendorp, many plans of Leyden and the neighbourhood were found lying in confusion about the room. Upon the table was a hurried farewell of that general to the scenes of his late discomfiture, written in Latin, as follows:—'*Vale civitas, valete castelli parvi, qui relicti estis propter aquam et non per vim inimicorum!*'" In other words,—"Farewell city; farewell little towers, from which we are driven not by the power of man, but by that of the waters." Nothing could be more true. It was not the hand of man, but the power of God in the waves of His sea which had brought to Him, and not to man, the victory.

To return to Leyden. That many touching scenes were witnessed on those famine-crowded quays on that day, who can doubt? "The poor creatures," writes the historian, "who, for two months, had tasted no wholesome human food, and who had been, as it were, living within the jaws of death, snatched eagerly the blessed gifts, at last too liberally bestowed. Many choked themselves to death in the greediness with which they devoured their bread; others became ill with the effects of plenty thus suddenly succeeding starvation. But these were isolated cases, a repetition of which was prevented."

Turning our thoughts then from these casualties, we dwell for a moment on the meeting between Lysken Arnoldzoon and her dear brother Karl, and that of Hans van Muler and his widowed mother. Floris Franck, too, and his daughter Margaret are there, and the advocate, whose name has often been mentioned in our story. See, then, from the deck of the "Peter and Paul," as it touches the quay to disburden itself of its load of provision, spring the two young seamen, and following them closely, though with less elastic step, the pastor

Junius. And then, before bread be eaten, see the re-united group bending together beneath heaven's canopy in prayer and thanksgiving too deep and too high for human utterance.

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And then, when the famished multitudes had been fed, and their keenest pangs of hunger assuaged, arose a cry,—"To the church! to the church!" And ere many minutes had passed away a solemn procession was formed. The admiral of the fleet, with the heroic burgomaster of Leyden, headed it; then followed magistrates, burghers, sailors, soldiers, wild savage Zealanders, citizens of every rank, women, children,—all pressed on, on to the great church of Leyden. There, in its crowded body and chancel, its aisles and galleries, wherever standing place could be made, "the starving and heroic city, which had been so firm in its resistance to an earthly tyrant, now bent itself in humble gratitude before the King of kings."

"After prayers," we are told, "the whole vast congregation joined in the thanksgiving hymn. Thousands of voices raised the song, but few were able to carry it to its conclusion, for the universal emotion, deepened by the music, became too full for utterance. The hymn was abruptly suspended, while the multitude wept like children:"—for, blessed be God, they could weep now.

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